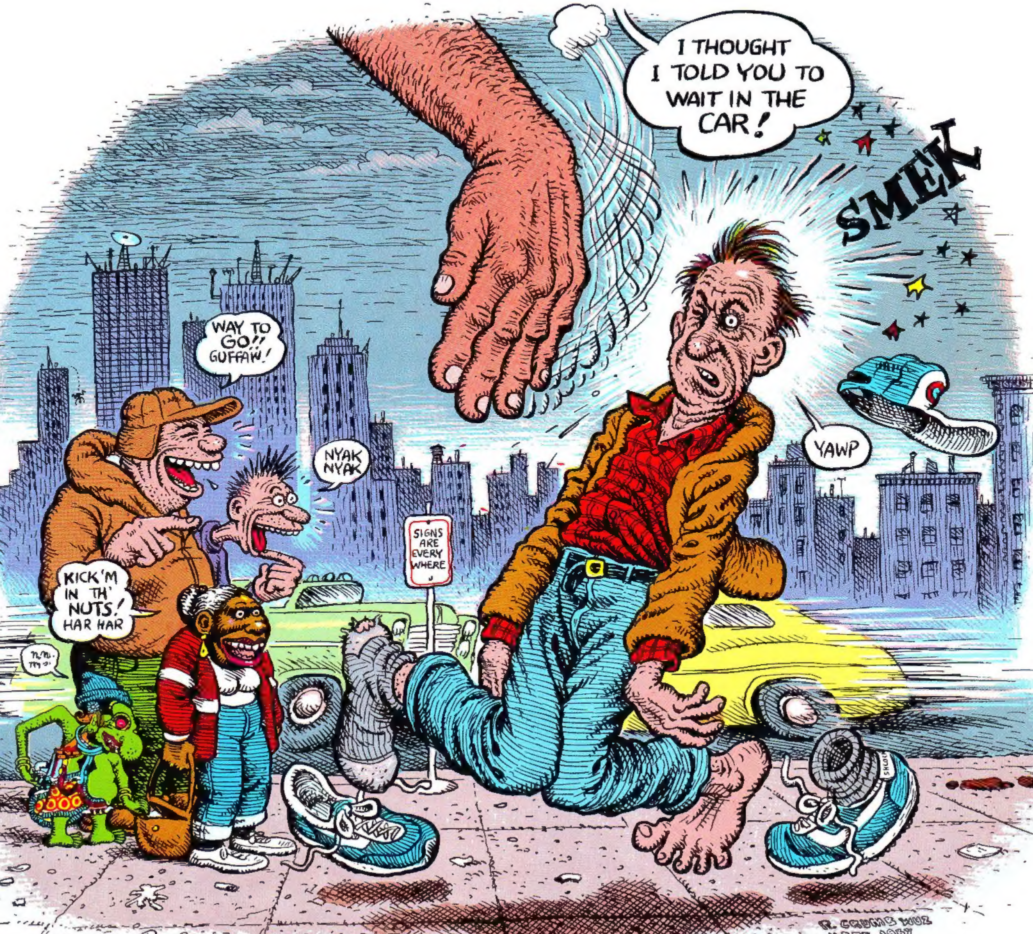
LAST GASP ECOFUNNIES

MORE SEXY STORIES BY WOMEN ARTISTS!

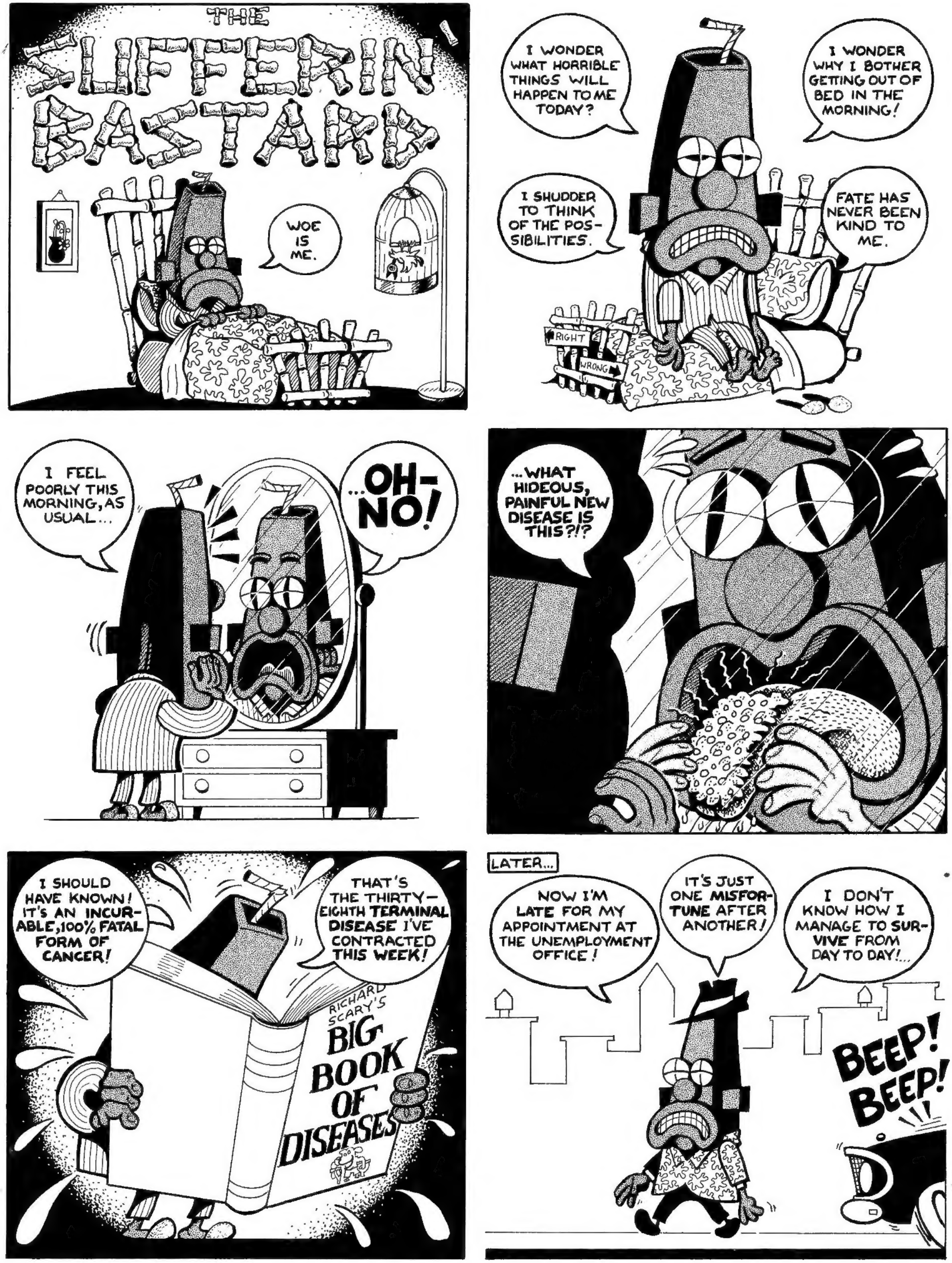
WEIRDO

NO. 19 ☞ A GRAPHIC JOURNAL FOR THE ROOTLESS, ALIENATED, NIHILIST, POST-MODERN, EXISTENTIALIST MASSES ☜ $3.95

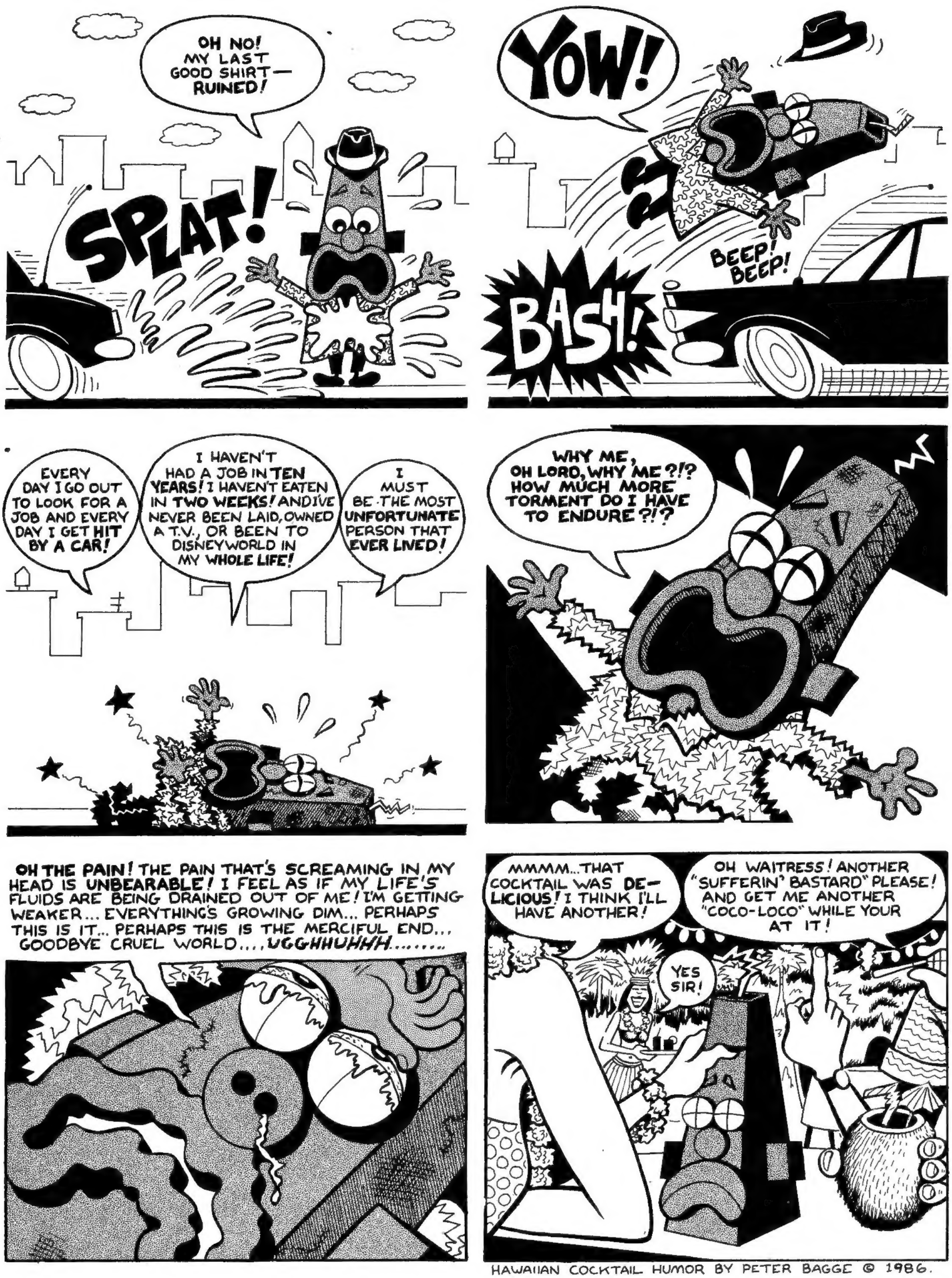

I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO WAIT IN THE CAR!
SMEK
YAWP
WAY TO GO!! GUFFAW!
NYAK NYAK
SIGNS ARE EVERY WHERE
KICK 'M IN TH' NUTS! HAR HAR
SHOW
R. CRUMB WUZ HERE 1987

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

FRANK STACK! MARK ZINGARELLI! S. CLAY WILSON! R. CRUMB! KIM DEITCH! STEPHEN CALT!!


THE SUFFERIN' BASTARD
WOE IS ME.
I WONDER WHAT HORRIBLE THINGS WILL HAPPEN TO ME TODAY?
I WONDER WHY I BOTHER GETTING OUT OF BED IN THE MORNING!
I SHUDDER TO THINK OF THE POSSIBILITIES.
FATE HAS NEVER BEEN KIND TO ME.
RIGHT
WRONG
I FEEL POORLY THIS MORNING, AS USUAL...
...OH-NO!
...WHAT HIDEOUS, PAINFUL NEW DISEASE IS THIS?!?
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN! IT'S AN INCURABLE, 100% FATAL FORM OF CANCER!
THAT'S THE THIRTY-EIGHTH TERMINAL DISEASE I'VE CONTRACTED THIS WEEK!
RICHARD SCARY'S BIG BOOK OF DISEASES
LATER...
NOW I'M LATE FOR MY APPOINTMENT AT THE UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICE!
IT'S JUST ONE MISFORTUNE AFTER ANOTHER!
I DON'T KNOW HOW I MANAGE TO SURVIVE FROM DAY TO DAY!...
BEEP! BEEP!

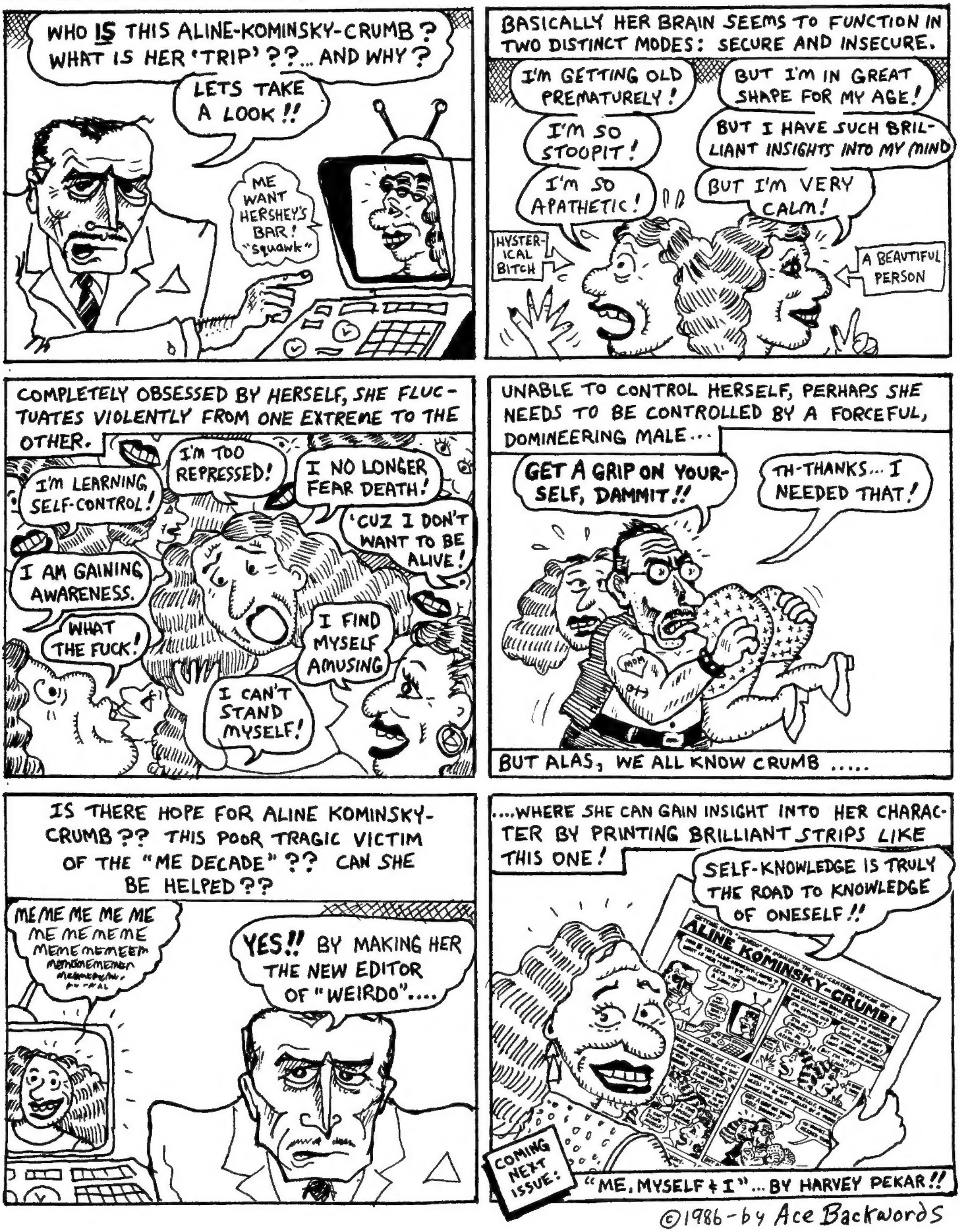
Weirdo #19 ©1993 R. Crumb. All rights reserved. Published by Last Gasp PO Box 410067 S.F. CA 94141-0067 Additional copies $5.00 each postpaid. Catalog of odd literature and underground comics $2.00. Age statement that you are over 18 years of age is required. Retailers: sell to adults only. ISBN 0-86719-175-9


OH NO! MY LAST GOOD SHIRT— RUINED!
SPLAT!
YOW!
BEEP! BEEP!
BASH!
EVERY DAY I GO OUT TO LOOK FOR A JOB AND EVERY DAY I GET HIT BY A CAR!
I HAVEN'T HAD A JOB IN TEN YEARS! I HAVEN'T EATEN IN TWO WEEKS! AND I'VE NEVER BEEN LAID, OWNED A T.V., OR BEEN TO DISNEYWORLD IN MY WHOLE LIFE!
I MUST BE THE MOST UNFORTUNATE PERSON THAT EVER LIVED!
WHY ME, OH LORD, WHY ME?!? HOW MUCH MORE TORMENT DO I HAVE TO ENDURE?!?
OH THE PAIN! THE PAIN THAT'S SCREAMING IN MY HEAD IS UNBEARABLE! I FEEL AS IF MY LIFE'S FLUIDS ARE BEING DRAINED OUT OF ME! I'M GETTING WEAKER... EVERYTHING'S GROWING DIM... PERHAPS THIS IS IT... PERHAPS THIS IS THE MERCIFUL END... GOODBYE CRUEL WORLD...., UGGHHUHHH........
MMMM...THAT COCKTAIL WAS DELICIOUS! I THINK I'LL HAVE ANOTHER!
OH WAITRESS! ANOTHER "SUFFERIN' BASTARD" PLEASE! AND GET ME ANOTHER "COCO-LOCO" WHILE YOUR AT IT!
YES SIR!

HAWAIIAN COCKTAIL HUMOR BY PETER BAGGE © 1986.

GETTING INTO "WEIRDO" BY INDULGING THE SELF-CENTERED PSYCHE OF....

ALINE KOMINSKY-CRUMB!


WHO IS THIS ALINE-KOMINSKY-CRUMB? WHAT IS HER 'TRIP'??... AND WHY?
LETS TAKE A LOOK!!
ME WANT HERSHEY'S BAR! "squawk"
BASICALLY HER BRAIN SEEMS TO FUNCTION IN TWO DISTINCT MODES: SECURE AND INSECURE.
I'M GETTING OLD PREMATURELY!
BUT I'M IN GREAT SHAPE FOR MY AGE!
I'M SO STOOPIT!
BUT I HAVE SUCH BRILLIANT INSIGHTS INTO MY MIND
I'M SO APATHETIC!
BUT I'M VERY CALM!
HYSTERICAL BITCH
A BEAUTIFUL PERSON
COMPLETELY OBSESSED BY HERSELF, SHE FLUCTUATES VIOLENTLY FROM ONE EXTREME TO THE OTHER.
I'M LEARNING SELF-CONTROL!
I'M TOO REPRESSED!
I NO LONGER FEAR DEATH!
'CUZ I DON'T WANT TO BE ALIVE!
I AM GAINING AWARENESS.
WHAT THE FUCK!
I FIND MYSELF AMUSING
I CAN'T STAND MYSELF!
UNABLE TO CONTROL HERSELF, PERHAPS SHE NEEDS TO BE CONTROLLED BY A FORCEFUL, DOMINEERING MALE...
GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF, DAMMIT!!
TH-THANKS... I NEEDED THAT!
MOM
BUT ALAS, WE ALL KNOW CRUMB .....
IS THERE HOPE FOR ALINE KOMINSKY-CRUMB?? THIS POOR TRAGIC VICTIM OF THE "ME DECADE"?? CAN SHE BE HELPED??
ME ME ME ME ME ME ME ME ME ME MEMEMEMEEM
YES!! BY MAKING HER THE NEW EDITOR OF "WEIRDO"....
....WHERE SHE CAN GAIN INSIGHT INTO HER CHARACTER BY PRINTING BRILLIANT STRIPS LIKE THIS ONE!
SELF-KNOWLEDGE IS TRULY THE ROAD TO KNOWLEDGE OF ONESELF!!
ALINE KOMINSKY-CRUMB!
COMING NEXT ISSUE:
"ME, MYSELF & I"... BY HARVEY PEKAR!!

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WEIRDO
BUSTER

NUMBER 19 THE MAGAZINE FOR HAIRBRAINED INTELLECTUALS WINTER 1987

BY HARVEY PEKAR

WORLD-FAMOUS COMIC-BOOK WRITER AND HOSPITAL FILE-CLERK HARVEY PEKAR BESTOWS HIS WISDOM ON ONE AND ALL.

THE UNDERGROUND COMIC book movement of the mid-1960's to mid-1970's produced a number of praiseworthy artists. A few, including ROBERT CRUMB, Gilbert Shelton, and Bill Griffith, have received some recognition, However, one of the finest Frank Stack, A.K.A. Foolbert Sturgeon, who has a three page story in this book, has been ignored.

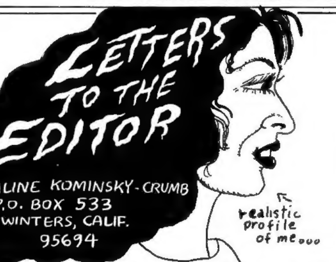
A gifted writer and illustrator, Stack is one of the most well-educated of all comic book artists. He has a thorough knowledge of cartooning and also holds a BFA in painting from the University of Texas and an MA from Wyoming. He's taught art at the university level for about twenty five years. His paintings and prints have been exhibited at various galleries in the USA and abroad

It is as a comic book artist, however, that Stack has done his best + most original work He honed his skills at the University of Texas humor magazine The Texas Ranger at a time when he was digesting various influences the most important being that of EC comics Evolving beyond that he produced in 1962 what some people, including Gilbert Shelton + historian Jay Kennedy, consider the first underground comic - The Adventures of Jesus He followed this in the late 1960's and early 70's with a few "New Adventures of Jesus" books in which Jesus is shown functioning in contemporary settings "Jesus Goes To a Movie," "Jesus Joins The Academic Community," "Jesus Joins the Armed Services." In these comics he introduces the huge, black, cigar-smoking street psychiatrist Dr Feelgood There were two Feelgood comics published (in 1972 + 84) In '72 Stack also published AMAZON COMICS, containing work dealing with the Trojan War and the battle of the sexes. Dorman's Dog, about the dog of one of Dr Feelgood's patients, was printed in this book

The first thing that impressed me about Stack was what a brilliant parodist he was, how much more well-read and articulate than the vast majority of comic writers. what a pleasure to read comics by a guy who makes references to "high brow" as well as popular culture! Academic and Military life, organized religion and contemporary politics are among the targets for Stack's satire, which is often angry

Stack is also a top notch illustrator Though his normal comic style is cartooney, it's always anatomically correct He captures people's essences; his figure drawing is spare and angular but he makes a few lines go a long way. The textural richness of his work is noteworthy, he produces subtlely graduated effects using cross hatching, closely-drawn parallel lines and lines of varied thickness Some of Stack's best drawing, a sequence of twelve brilliantly constructed, virtually wordless pages, can be found in Feelgood Funnies #2

As impressive as Stack's work has been to date, I believe he is capable of extending his range. The autobiographical "Thinking About the Lone Ranger" in this book shows that he can write well realistically as well as satirically, and he's had the ability for decades to do excellent realistic as well as cartooney illustration I don't know what he's going to involve himself with in the next decade but I hope he spends a lot of time doing comics - the combination of talent and knowledge he brings to the medium is rare indeed.



WELL FRIENDS, I'M SO GREATLY DISAPPOINTED .. NOT-A-ONE REALLY, TOTALLY, JUICY GUT WRENCHING HATE LETTER DID I RECEIVE AFTER MY SCATHING, INSULTING, INFLAMMATORY EDITORIAL IN THE LAST ISSUE WHATSA MATTA WITH YOU READERS!? I GOT TONS OF NICE LETTERS PRAISING MY LOOKS AND TASTE, AND SOME, SLIGHTLY CRITICAL ONES RANTING AND BEGGING TO BE IN WEIRDO. BUT I DESPERATELY CRAVE SOME INTENSE CONTROVERSY! DID THIS SHARP-TONGUED SHREW REALLY SCARE YOU LITTLE JERKS OFF, OR WHAT??

WHILE I'M ON THE RAG HERE, LET ME TELL YOU EAGER LETTER WRITERS WHAT KINDS OF THINGS GET ON MY NERVES AND FORCE ME TO THROW YOUR LETTERS + ART (I USE THIS TERM LOOSELY) INSTANTLY INTO THE BURNABLE FILE! NO.1. DON'T WRITE MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK YOUR LETTERS START LOOKING LIKE JUNK MAIL. HOLD BACK, BE A LITTLE COOL, FOR GOD'S SAKE, GIMME A CHANCE, I'M A HOUSE WIFE I'VE GOT VACUUMING AND LAUNDRY TO DO, BOMBARDMENT IS NOT A GOOD APPROACH WITH ME. NO 2, I HATE PEN-TELS, PLEASE DON'T WRITE WITH THEM. I AUTOMATICALLY ASSUME THE USER OF PEN-TELS IS AN OOZING PUSS-FACED NEUROTIC WITH NO FRIENDS. NO 3. I CAN'T STAND COLOR-CO-ORDINATED, DESIGNER STATIONERY.. IT MAKES ME THINK YOU HAVE MONEY TO BURN AND TIME TO WASTE HAVING NEW LETTERHEADS MADE FOR YOURSELF. SO KEEP IT SIMPLE AND TASTEFUL! YOU CAN TYPE IF YOUR WRITING IS ILLEGIBLE; BALL-POINT PEN OR PENCIL ON PLAIN WHITE PAPER OR YELLOW LINED PAPER IS JUST FINE. I'M NOT FUSSY!

ANYWAY, AFTER ABOUT THREE MONTHS OF MAIL FROM YOU GUYS I CAN SEE WHAT DROVE ROBERT AND PETER BAGGE NUTS... (I HAVEN'T GOTTEN A SINGLE PRESENT.) SO IF I DON'T ANSWER YOU AFTER ABOUT TEN LETTERS TAKE THE HINT. I DON'T CARE IF I'M POPULAR, I'M NOT YOUR THERAPIST, I DON'T WANT TO HAVE SEX WITH YOU (WELL PROBABLY NOT) AND I DO WANT TO MAKE A GREAT MAGAZINE THAT WILL MAKE ME FAMOUS AND RESPECTED AND WILL MAKE LOTTSA MONEY FOR THE PUBLISHER AND WILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PUBLICATION OF OUR TIME (THAT'S RIGHT, RAW!) SO JUST DO A FABULOUS, EARTH SHATTERING STORY. A FIRST PIECE OF WORK BY YOU, PREFERABLY, SO I CAN TAKE CREDIT FOR LAUNCHING YOUR CAREER, WHEN I'M ON TV TALK SHOWS.

OH BY THE WAY, I HOPE YOU LIKE HARVEY PEKARS COLUMN + DID YOU CATCH HIM ON THE DAVID LETTERMAN SHOW? ALSO DID YOU NOTICE THAT COSMO COPIED OUR OCTOBER COVER? SUCH NOIVE! WELL, HOPE YOU LOVE THIS FABULOUS ISSUE THAT I SLAVED OVER FOR YOUR SATISFACTION! AND. NOT ONLY DID I NOT RECEIVE ANY PRESENTS FOR ME FROM YOU READERS, BUT NOTHING FOR MY PRECIOUS CHILD SOPHIE! (CHANUKAH + CHRISTMAS ARE OVER BUT VALENTINES DAY IS A NICE HOLIDAY!)

* * *

DEAR ALINE KOMINSKY-CRUMB, WEIRDO EDITOR,

.... I'VE COMPLAINED THAT U.G COMICS OFTEN HAVE AN UNCIVILIZED SLANT, AND LACK UPLIFTING MESSAGES, BUT MAYBE A LOT OF NATURAL EXPLANATION FOR THIS IS THE NEED TO USE PRIMITIVE, ELEMENTAL ASPECTS OF ONE'S NATURE THAT PIONEERS HAVE TO MAKE THEIR EFFORTS. THIS MAY NOT BE SO DIFFERENT FROM THE VIRULENCE, + REJECTION OF THE PAST, THAT APPEARED IN THE ORIGINAL MODERN-ART MOVEMENT.

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO CONTRIBUTE MORE TO WEIRDO, BUT I REALIZE THAT I DON'T YET UNDERSTAND THE MAG AND WHAT IT NEEDS. I HAVE A NOTION THAT U G. COMICS OFTEN WORK ON A DIFFERENT ARTISTIC PREMISE FROM OLDER COMICS RATHER LIKE CUBISM + OTHER PREVIOUS MODERN-ART MOVEMENTS BROKE AWAY FROM OLDER ART + WORKED ON A DIFFERENT PREMISE ABOUT MEANS + ENDS FOR FORM (STYLE) + CONTENT (STORY): "IT'S IMPORTANT HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, NOT JUST WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY OR SHOW." I THINK THAT YOUR FIRST WEIRDO IS A GOOD START.

— YOURS,
B.N. DUNCAN
BERKELEY, CALIF.

ALINE,

HOW'S THINGS WITH YOU? HOW WAS YOUR CHRISTMAS? YA WANNA KNOW HOW MINE WAS? PROB'LY NOT, BUT I'LL TELL YOU ANYWAY (THIS IS WHAT YOU GET FOR SAYING YOU KNOW WE'VE BEEN THRU SO MUCH AND ARE DEEPLY INTERESTED IN HEARING ABOUT IT.) CHRISTMAS EVE STARTED OUT LIKE IT WAS GOING TO BE GREAT! MY LAST JOB WAS BEING A SANTA IN A LOCAL MALL I MET A COUPLE OF GIRLS THERE. ONE LIKED ME, AND THE OTHER ONE, THE ATTRACTIVE ONE, I TRIED TO SET UP WITH ONE OF MY ROOMIES. THEY NEVER SEEMED TO HIT IT OFF THO. ANYWAY THE CHICK THAT LIKED ME IS THIS VIRGIN WHO WANTED ME TO TAKE CARE OF THAT SITUATION FOR HER FOR X-MAS, BUT COME CHRISTMAS EVE, SHE STARTED FEELING BAD ABOUT RUNNING AROUND ON HER BOYFRIEND SO SHE BACKED OUT I WENT BACK TO THE MALL TO PICK UP THE OTHER CHICK TO TAKE HER HOME WHEN I TOLD HER WHAT HAPPENED SHE SAID "LET'S GO GET DRUNK" WE DID WE POURED OUR MISERABLE SELF PITTYING SOULS OUT TO EACH OTHER FOR HOURS, RAN AROUND TOWN, AND HAD A SWELL TIME WALLOWING IN MISERY. WE GOT BACK TO MY PLACE AND LO AND BEHOLD NOBODY WAS HOME! SHE COOKED DINNER (LIKE A REAL WOMAN SHOULD FOR A MAN SHE WOULDN'T EVEN LET ME IN THE KITCHEN, SO SHE HAD TO BRING ME MY BEERS. WHAT A WOMAN!) AND THE MIDNITE HOUR ARRIVED. CHRISTMAS I KISSED HER GREAT I THOUGHT, THIS IS IT! BUT ABOUT TWO SECONDS LATER GUESS WHO GOT HOME THE GUY I WAS TRYING TO SET HER UP WITH FOR A MONTH! THEY WENT RIGHT TO HIS BEDROOM! I GUESS I ONLY THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO GET TO UNWRAP THAT THING FOR CHRISTMAS, BUT FUCK NO! IT SOUNDS LIKE I CARE, BUT I DON'T I WAS TOO DRUNK TO DO ANYTHING ANYWAY, SO I JUST WENT TO BED

HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU SOON,
THE FAT DUDE
William Reeves
LAWNDALE, CALIF.

THANKS FOR SHARING THIS HEARTFELT, DEEPLY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH WEIRDO, YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY A VERY SENSITIVE PERSON WHO HAS BARED HIS SOUL.. I HOPE THIS WILL ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO DO THE SAME!!

WEIRDO NO. 19, WINTER, 1986-'87. PUBLISHED BY LAST GASP ECO-FUNNIES.

DEAR WEIRDOS,

THIS LETTER IS IN RESPONSE TO RODNEY SCHROEDER'S LETTER IN #17 HE CLAIMS THAT OBJECTIVISM "IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO MEAN-SPIRITEDNESS, TERROR AND VOMIT-WORSHIP THAT IS THE HALLMARK OF WEIRDO", AND THAT "WEIRDO IS VERY COMFORTABLY WITHIN THE MAINSTREAM OF MODERN ART" BECAUSE OF THE ABOVE.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT CULTURE SCHROEDER HAS BEEN EXPOSED TO BUT IT SURE IS NOT PRESENT-DAY AMERIKAN CULTURE, THE "REAGAN 80'S USA" THAT HE SPEAKS OF. THE DOMINANT CULTURE TRIES TO CONCEAL OR TRIVIALIZE MEAN-SPIRITEDNESS & TERROR IT TURNS THE INTERNAL NIGHTMARE INTO FORMULAIC STEPHEN KING BEST SELLERS OBJECTIVISM, WITH IT'S ULTRA-POSITIVE ATTITUDE SMUGNESS AND INNATE CONSERVATISM, LIES FAR CLOSER TO THE STATUS QUO THAN WEIRDO. IN FACT, OBJECTIVISM IS A PRIME EXAMPLE OF THE HOMOGENIZING PROCESS THAT THE STATUS QUO FORCES UPON PRODUCTS, WORKS, CREATIONS AND IDEAS. ESSENTIALLY IT IS A WATERED-DOWN, DILUTED MISUNDERSTANDING OF NIETZCHE. ALL THE INTENSITY, HARD-EDGES, AND TRUE GREATNESSARE REMOVED BY PEIKOFF, RAND, ETC AND THE RESULT IS "LITE" PHILOSOPHY

WEIRDO ON THE OTHER HAND EXPLORES AND REVELS IN THE DARKNESS THAT THE DOMINANT CULTURE DISMISSES IF YOU PICK UP THIS MAGAZINE AND EXPECT TO FIND SPIELBERG/LAURIE ANDERSON NOVELTIES FOR YUPPIES, UNUSUAL BUT NOT THREATENING, THEN PUT THIS DOWN AND READ SOMETHING MORE TO YOUR TASTES LIKE, TIME. UNLIKE THE MAINSTREAM, WEIRDO DOES NOT TRY TO MAKE ITSELF SO EVERY GOOD YUPPIE FAMILY CAN ENJOY EVERY PAGE. IT DOES NOT PRETEND THAT LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL MAYBE SCHROEDER IS SO LOST IN HIS OBJECTIVIST FANTASY TO REALIZE THAT LIFE IS NOT A SERIES OF CLICHÉS FOISTED UPON THE MASSES BY THE DIVINE MEDIA OR THE DIVINE AYN RAND

AS THE OLD HAG ON THE COVER OF #17 SAYS, "THIS IS NOT A NICE MAGAZINE!" IF PEOPLE LIKE SCHROEDER CAN'T HANDLE IT THEN THEY SHOULD PUT THE MAGAZINE DOWN AND HEAD STRAIGHT FOR "RAMBO III."

MICHAEL SNIDER
LOS ANGELES, CA

DEAR MISS KOMINSKY CRUMB,

NO OFFENSE BUT THAT FIRST ISSUE OF WEIRDO THAT YOU EDITED WAS A BIT MUCH OF YOU. NOT THAT I'M SAYING YOU'RE NOT A WEIRDO OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT BUT LET'S NOT HOG UP TOO MANY PAGES WITH OUR OWN WEIRDNESS, SHALL WE? STILL IF YOU SQUINT AT THE COVER IN THE DARK IN THE FRONT SEAT OF A CHEVY CAPRICE IT DOES KIND OF LOOK LIKE A COSMO COVER. AND THAT'S COOL ACTUALLY I DO LIKE YOUR WORK, BUT I THINK WEIRDO SHOULD BE A SHOWCASE FOR AS MANY NUTCASES AS YOU CAN CRAM IN IT. ALSO I HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING WITH THIS WOMAN'S MAGAZINE SCHTICK. EVERYBODY KNOWS BOYS BUY THE COMICS STILL IF YOU CAN GET WOMEN INTO THEM IT MIGHT BE GOOD FOR THE ARTFORM. AS FOR ME I LIKE A GOOD ISSUE OF COSMO IF I'M STANDING IN LINE AT THE SUPERMARKET BUT I'D NEVER BUY ONE. TELL JUSTIN GREEN TO LIGHTEN UP AND GET MORE NEUROTIC. GOOD LUCK. I WANT A GOOD COMIC TO READ.

YOURS SINCERELY,
LANCE HACK
SAN FRANCISCO

"ANOTHER POWERFUL LETTER FROM AN ARROGANT THIRD-EYE KINDA GUY"
↓

ALINE,

THE COVER: FIRE UP THE MALE CARTOONING POPULACE, WHY DONTCHA! GAWSH! PETER BAGGE, FROM WHAT I HEAR HAS TWO GUYS THAT WANT TO BEAT HIM UP! BUT FROM WHAT I SEE THAT YOU'RE SO CHARMING AND GORGEOUS, THE HOT HEADS WILL HUMBLE THEMSELVES ONCE THEY SET EYES ON YOU IF THEY SET OUT ON A MISSION OF TERROR. YOU DON'T HAVE THAT ANGRY GLINT LIKE BOB TO SCARE 'EM OFF, BUT HEY! I'D RATHER USE BEAUTY TO SOOTH THE SAVAGE BEAST BETTER ANY DAY! THIS LOOKS POWERFULLY FEMINIST IN A WEIRDO SORT OF WAY, WHAT CAN I TELL YOU.

DEEP THOUGHTS! ALINE? IS THIS AN ADVERTISEMENT TO GET MEN? THESE SEX STARVED HOUSEWIVES CAN BE PRETTY EXCITING FROM WHAT I HEAR HOWEVER, THE SAD FACT IS MOSTLY ONLY UGLY PIMPLY FACED REJECT BOYS READ WEIRDO SO I'D SAY FORGET ART AS A TOOL TO ATTRACT **LOVERS**. USE AGGRESSIVE CHARM AND GOOD LOOKS LIKE I DO! IT WORKS ONE HELL OF A LOT BETTER! YEAH!!! OOPS, SORRY BOB- MAYBE WE SHOULD KEEP HER GROPING AROUND IN THE DARK SO SHE'LL STAY HOME AND TAKE CARE OF THE FAMILY

BUSTER CALHOUN THE LIVING CARTOON
(MIKE PARLETTE)
SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

DEAR ALINE,

MODE O'DAY WAS EXCELLENT AND ALL THE OTHER THINGS ONE USUALLY SAYS WHEN PRAISING ANOTHER TYPICALLY EXCELLENT R. CRUMB CARTOON. YEA, ITS TRUE, NASTY LETTERS MAKE SUCH MORE INTERESTING COPY... BUT YOU GUYS ARE MAKING IT MORE DIFFICULT ALL THE TIME TO WRITE INTERESTING LETTERS WHAT WITH THE OVERALL GREAT QUALITY OF THE MAG. THE LATEST SEEMS TO HOLD TOGETHER AS A MORE COHESIVE WHOLE. MORE LIKE A UNIFIED MAGAZINE, RATHER THAN A HODGE-PODGE COLLECTION OF ODDS AND ENDS, LIKE UNDER THE REGIME OF WHATSHIS NAME.

HOPE "THE CRITICS" WEREN'T TOO HOSTILE TOWARDS MR. BAGGE. REMEMBER, WE'RE VOCIFEROUS IN OUR COMMENTS ABOUT WEIRDO BECAUSE IT MEANS SO MUCH TO US. AND I HOPE YOU KEEP THAT IN MIND, ALINE, AS WE TAR AND FEATHER YOU AND RAKE YOU ACROSS THE COALS.

I THOUGHT THE ITCHY-DOG-BUTT STORY WAS TOTALLY GROSS. BUT MARY LOVED IT-- AND SHE'S NEVER LIKED WEIRDO IN THE PAST SO MAYBE THE ALINE WEIRDO WILL APPEAL MORE TO WOMEN. AND DOG BUTT LOVERS.

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!!

ACE BACKWARDSSSSSSSS
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

DEAR ALINE,

WELL, I JUST FINISHED THE #18 WEIRDO AND TALK ABOUT THE MIX OF FEELINGS. ON THE ONE HAND YOU'VE GOT THIS GREAT "COSMO" PARODY COVER, A FINE DORI SEDA STORY, AND OF COURSE, THE EVER-EXCELLENT WORK OF EL CRUMBO.

ON THE OTHER HAND, YOU'VE GOT THE JUSTIN GREEN STORY, WHICH I THINK HE COULD HAVE DONE BETTER AS A COMIC STRIP AND THE EAST TEXAS STRIP. I THOUGHT THESE WERE INTERESTING STORIES, AND I WOULDN'T MIND AN OCCASIONAL PROSE PIECE, BUT I STILL THINK OF WEIRDO AS A SHOWCASE FOR COMICS, MOSTLY.

THEN SADLY, YOU'VE GOT THE REST OF THE MAGAZINE, WHICH (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF DIANE NOOMINS PIECE) SUCKED PURE + SIMPLE. SPAIN'S STORY WAS INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO ME, AND I CAN'T SEE ANY ARTISTIC GROWTH IN HIS WORK SINCE THE 60'S. "4 RED BRIDES" WAS A COMPLETE WASTE OF SPACE. "THE VALMOR STORY", WHILE POSSIBLY OF INTEREST TO ANOTHER ANAL-RETENTIVE COLLECTOR, WAS AWFULLY BORING. MORE SPACE COULD'VE BEEN DEVOTED TO THE VALMOR GRAPHICS (WHICH ARE INDEED SUPERB) AND LESS TO ZWIGOFF'S NOT VERY GRIPPING PERSONAL HISTORY.

FINALLY, ALINE, THERE ARE YOUR OWN CONTRIBUTIONS. I'D SAY THE MAIN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOUR WORK AND YOUR HUSBANDS IS THAT BOB'S SPEAKS TO SOMEONE BESIDES HIMSELF; HIS ILLUSTRATED DIFFICULTIES WITH LIFE SEEM TO BE REAL ATTEMPTS TO DEAL WITH THOSE PROBLEMS VIA CREATIVE CARTOONING, WHEREAS YOUR CARTOONING STRIKES ME AS THE PUREST SELF-INDULGENCE.

I'D ALSO LIKE TO SECOND KEVIN DIXON'S OPINION (SEE HIS LETTER WEIRDO #10) ON YOUR CHOICE OF CONTRIBUTORS. DO YOU REALLY HAVE TO GIVE ALL YOUR SPACE TO THESE "FRIENDS OF THE FAMILY"? WOULD IT BE SUCH A HARDSHIP TO DEVOTE 1 PG. PER ISSUE TO READER ART? POOR UNPUBLISHED SHITHEADS LIKE KEVIN OR ME WOULD ACCEPT MINISCULE AMOUNTS OF MONEY FOR THE CHANCE TO BE PUBLISHED. YOU COULD PULL IN MORE READERS SINCE EVERY FAN WANTS TO SEE WHATS NEW IN THE COMIX WORLD AND MAYBE GET A CRACK AT ENTRANCE THEREIN. YOU COULD BECOME THE SATURDAY NITE LIVE OF COMIX; YEARS FROM NOW FAMOUS CARTOONISTS (LIKE I WILL BE) WILL RETURN TO KISS YOUR FEET IN GRATITUDE!!

SO ALINE, YOU CAN RISE UPWARD TO UNDERGROUND GLORY, HONORED BY ALL AS AN INSPIRATIONAL FIGURE IN AMERICAN GRAPHICS; OR, YOU CAN CONTINUE THE DOWNWARD SLIDE YOU'VE ALREADY BEGUN, UNTIL YOU WIND UP IN RICHLY DESERVED FINANCIAL TURMOIL AND PERSONAL HELL. THE CHOICE IS YOURS.

LOVE, EDGAR "BOLT" UPRIGHT
CHAPEL HILL, NC.

THIS JOB IS REALLY FUN.. YOU BOYS GET SO WORKED UP!! —ALINE

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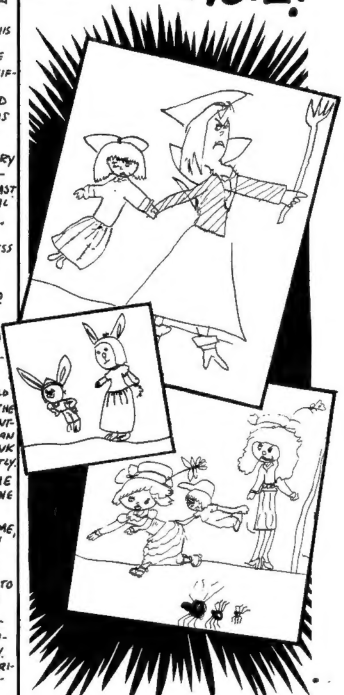

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THINKING ABOUT THE LONE RANGER

BY FOOLBERT STURGEON

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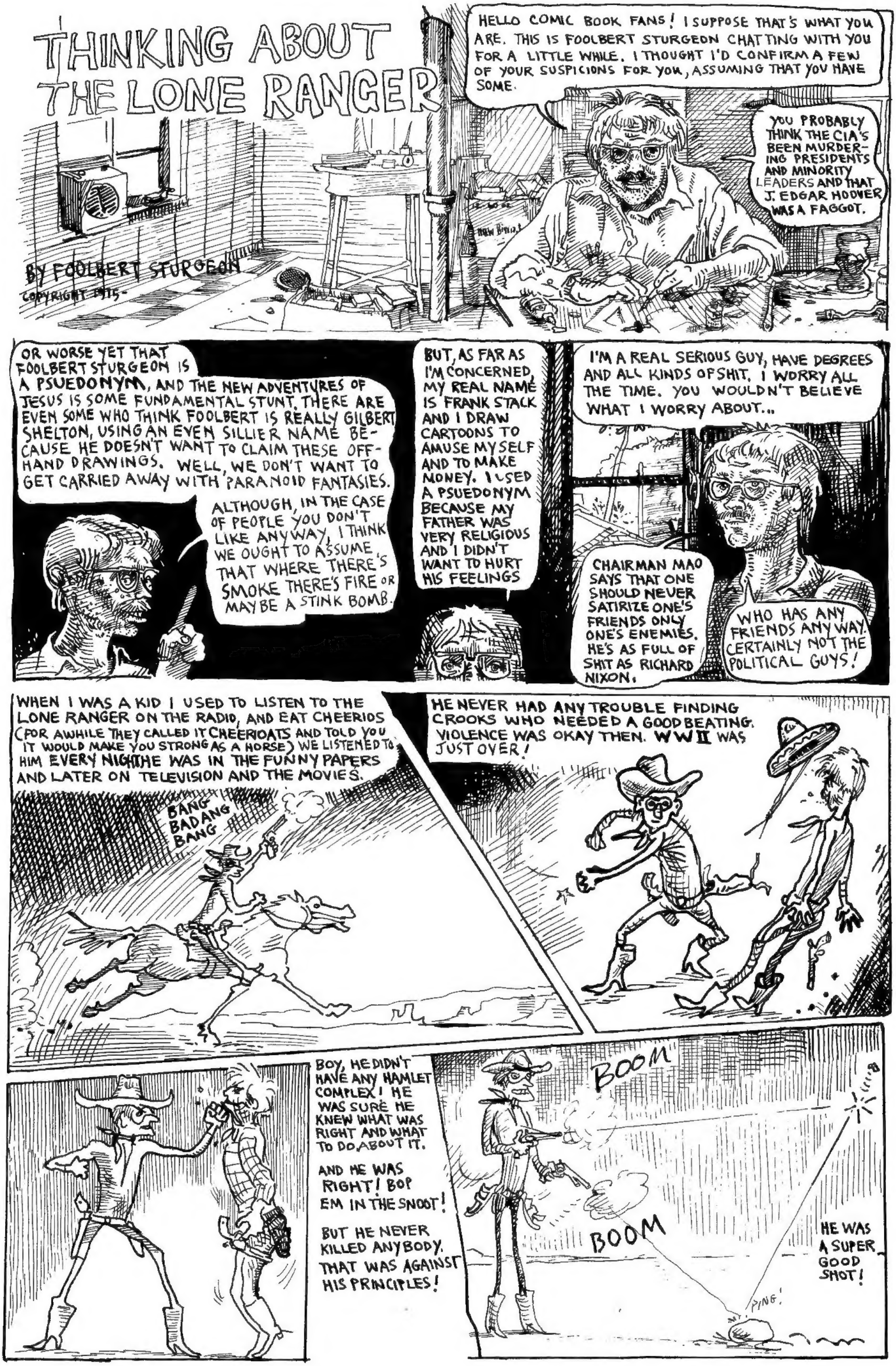
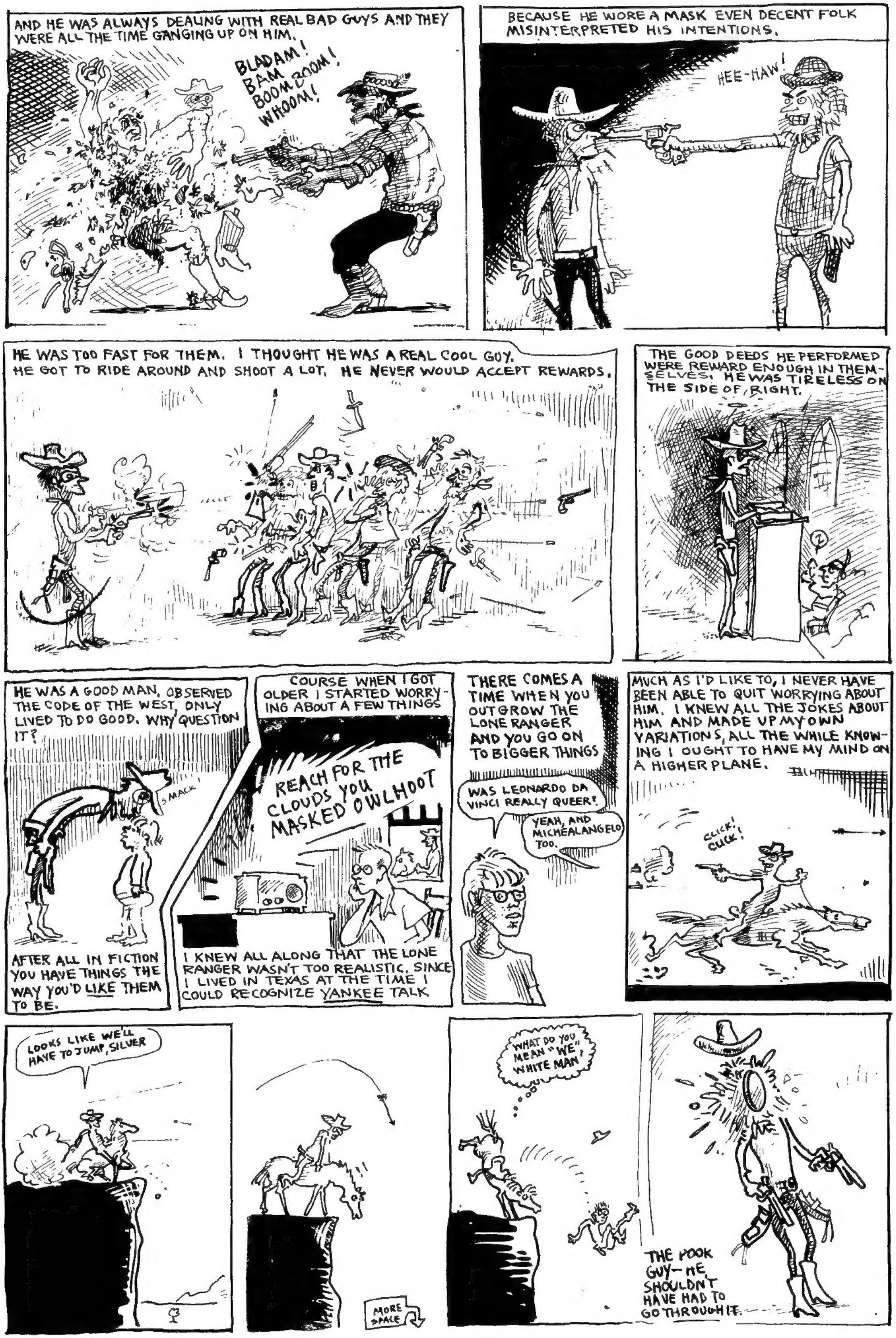
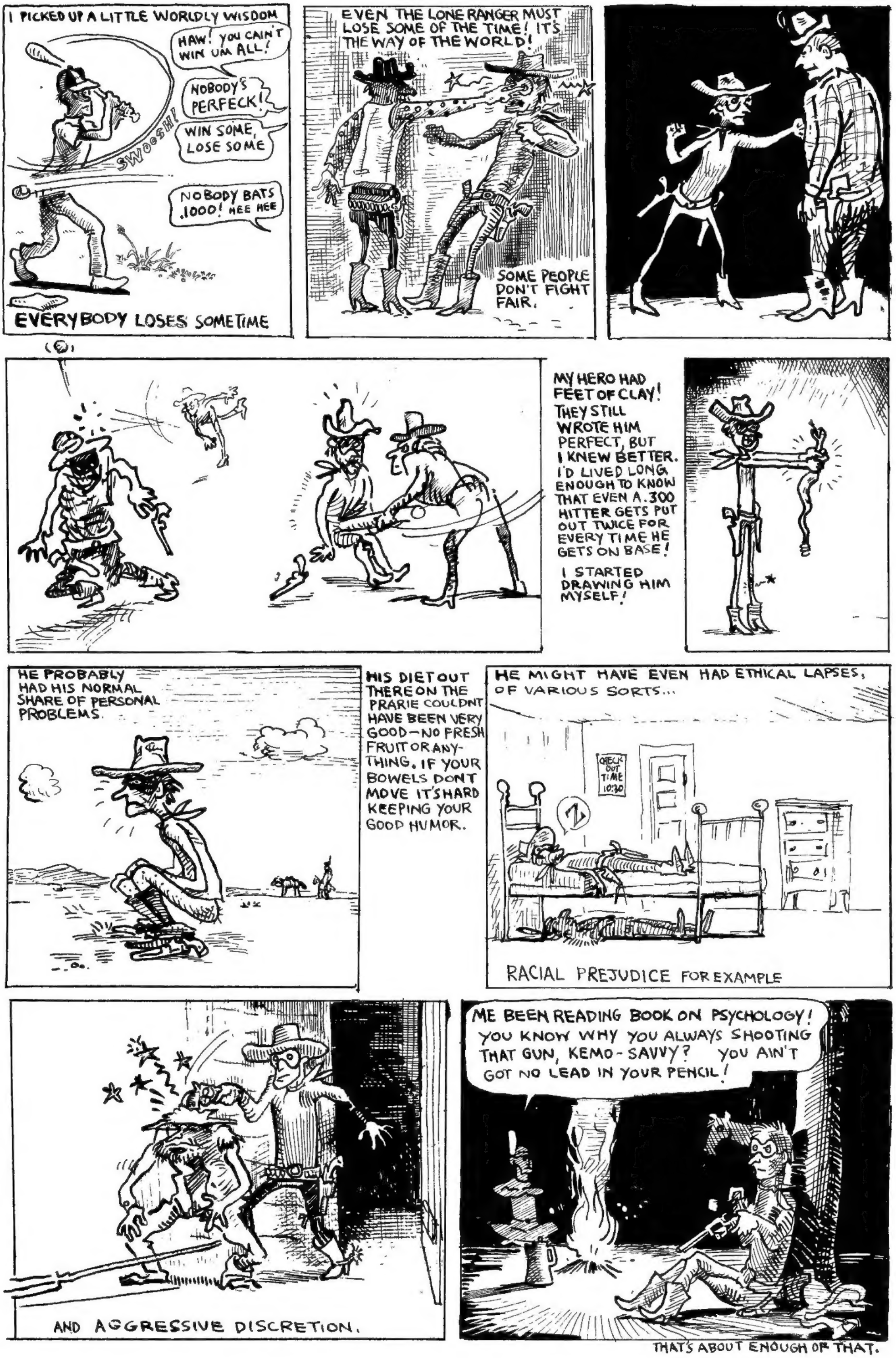
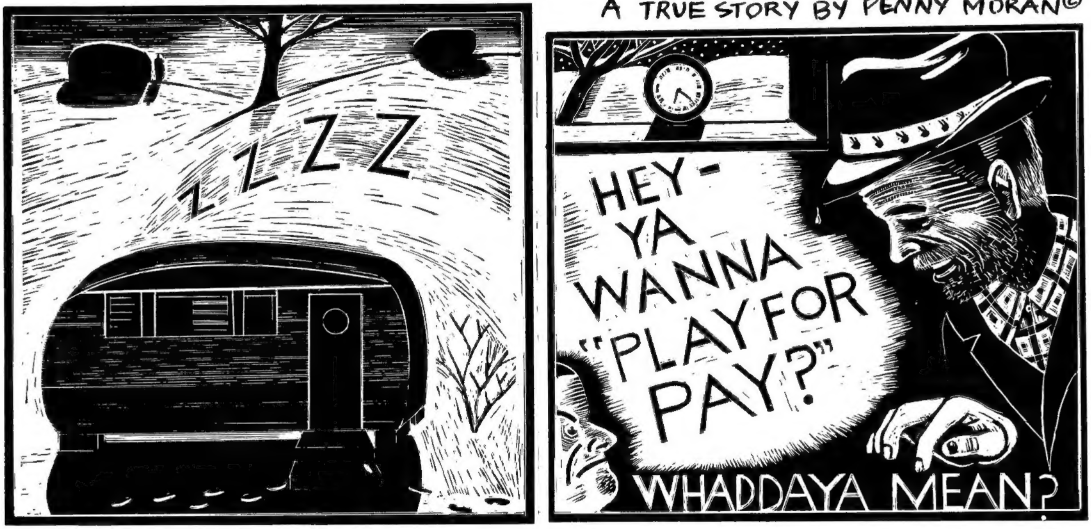

HELLO COMIC BOOK FANS! I SUPPOSE THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE. THIS IS FOOLBERT STURGEON CHATTING WITH YOU FOR A LITTLE WHILE. I THOUGHT I'D CONFIRM A FEW OF YOUR SUSPICIONS FOR YOU, ASSUMING THAT YOU HAVE SOME.
YOU PROBABLY THINK THE CIA'S BEEN MURDERING PRESIDENTS AND MINORITY LEADERS AND THAT J. EDGAR HOOVER WAS A FAGGOT.
NEW BIRDS
OR WORSE YET THAT FOOLBERT STURGEON IS A PSUEDONYM, AND THE NEW ADVENTURES OF JESUS IS SOME FUNDAMENTAL STUNT. THERE ARE EVEN SOME WHO THINK FOOLBERT IS REALLY GILBERT SHELTON, USING AN EVEN SILLIER NAME BECAUSE HE DOESN'T WANT TO CLAIM THESE OFF-HAND DRAWINGS. WELL, WE DON'T WANT TO GET CARRIED AWAY WITH PARANOID FANTASIES.
ALTHOUGH, IN THE CASE OF PEOPLE YOU DON'T LIKE ANYWAY, I THINK WE OUGHT TO ASSUME THAT WHERE THERE'S SMOKE THERE'S FIRE OR MAYBE A STINK BOMB.
BUT, AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, MY REAL NAME IS FRANK STACK AND I DRAW CARTOONS TO AMUSE MYSELF AND TO MAKE MONEY. I USED A PSUEDONYM BECAUSE MY FATHER WAS VERY RELIGIOUS AND I DIDN'T WANT TO HURT HIS FEELINGS
I'M A REAL SERIOUS GUY, HAVE DEGREES AND ALL KINDS OF SHIT. I WORRY ALL THE TIME. YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE WHAT I WORRY ABOUT..
CHAIRMAN MAO SAYS THAT ONE SHOULD NEVER SATIRIZE ONE'S FRIENDS ONLY ONE'S ENEMIES. HE'S AS FULL OF SHIT AS RICHARD NIXON.
WHO HAS ANY FRIENDS ANYWAY. CERTAINLY NOT THE POLITICAL GUYS!
WHEN I WAS A KID I USED TO LISTEN TO THE LONE RANGER ON THE RADIO, AND EAT CHEERIOS (FOR AWHILE THEY CALLED IT CHEERIOATS AND TOLD YOU IT WOULD MAKE YOU STRONG AS A HORSE) WE LISTENED TO HIM EVERY NIGHT. HE WAS IN THE FUNNY PAPERS AND LATER ON TELEVISION AND THE MOVIES.
BANG BADANG BANG
HE NEVER HAD ANY TROUBLE FINDING CROOKS WHO NEEDED A GOOD BEATING. VIOLENCE WAS OKAY THEN. WW II WAS JUST OVER!
BOY, HE DIDN'T HAVE ANY HAMLET COMPLEX! HE WAS SURE HE KNEW WHAT WAS RIGHT AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT.
AND HE WAS RIGHT! BOP EM IN THE SNOOT!
BUT HE NEVER KILLED ANYBODY. THAT WAS AGAINST HIS PRINCIPLES!
BOOM
BOOM
PING!
HE WAS A SUPER GOOD SHOT!


AND HE WAS ALWAYS DEALING WITH REAL BAD GUYS AND THEY WERE ALL THE TIME GANGING UP ON HIM.
BLADAM! BAM BOOM ZOOM! BOOM! WHOOM!
BECAUSE HE WORE A MASK EVEN DECENT FOLK MISINTERPRETED HIS INTENTIONS.
HEE-HAW!
HE WAS TOO FAST FOR THEM. I THOUGHT HE WAS A REAL COOL GUY. HE GOT TO RIDE AROUND AND SHOOT A LOT. HE NEVER WOULD ACCEPT REWARDS.
THE GOOD DEEDS HE PERFORMED WERE REWARD ENOUGH IN THEMSELVES. HE WAS TIRELESS ON THE SIDE OF RIGHT.
Z
HE WAS A GOOD MAN, OBSERVED THE CODE OF THE WEST, ONLY LIVED TO DO GOOD. WHY QUESTION IT?
SMACK!
AFTER ALL IN FICTION YOU HAVE THINGS THE WAY YOU'D LIKE THEM TO BE.
COURSE WHEN I GOT OLDER I STARTED WORRYING ABOUT A FEW THINGS
REACH FOR THE CLOUDS YOU MASKED OWLHOOT
I KNEW ALL ALONG THAT THE LONE RANGER WASN'T TOO REALISTIC. SINCE I LIVED IN TEXAS AT THE TIME I COULD RECOGNIZE YANKEE TALK
THERE COMES A TIME WHEN YOU OUTGROW THE LONE RANGER AND YOU GO ON TO BIGGER THINGS
WAS LEONARDO DA VINCI REALLY QUEER?
YEAH, AND MICHEALANGELO TOO.
MUCH AS I'D LIKE TO, I NEVER HAVE BEEN ABLE TO QUIT WORRYING ABOUT HIM. I KNEW ALL THE JOKES ABOUT HIM AND MADE UP MY OWN VARIATIONS, ALL THE WHILE KNOWING I OUGHT TO HAVE MY MIND ON A HIGHER PLANE.
CLICK! CLICK!
LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE TO JUMP, SILVER
MORE SPACE
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "WE" WHITE MAN?
THE POOR GUY—HE SHOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO GO THROUGH IT.

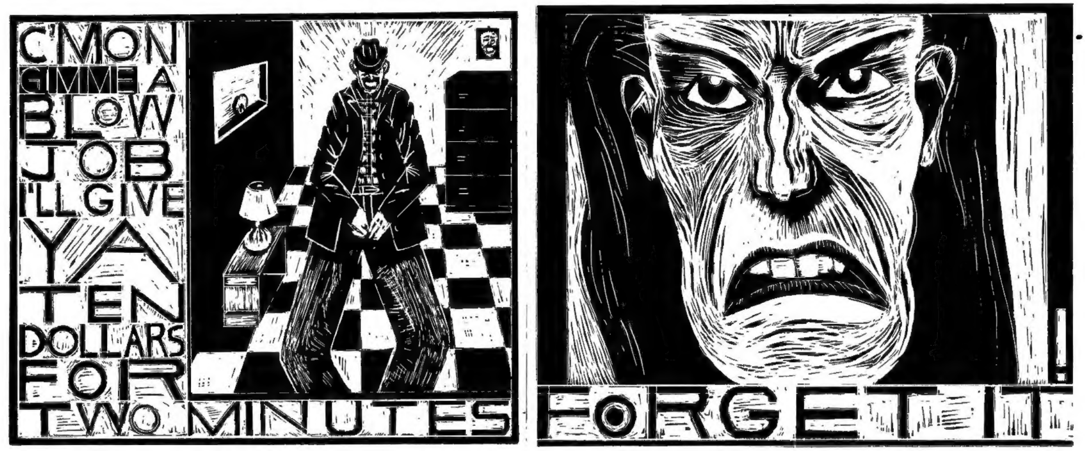

I PICKED UP A LITTLE WORLDLY WISDOM
HAW! YOU CAIN'T WIN UM ALL!
NOBODY'S PERFECK!
SWOOSH!
WIN SOME, LOSE SOME
NOBODY BATS .1000! HEE HEE
EVERYBODY LOSES SOMETIME
EVEN THE LONE RANGER MUST LOSE SOME OF THE TIME! IT'S THE WAY OF THE WORLD!
SOME PEOPLE DON'T FIGHT FAIR.
MY HERO HAD FEET OF CLAY! THEY STILL WROTE HIM PERFECT, BUT I KNEW BETTER. I'D LIVED LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT EVEN A .300 HITTER GETS PUT OUT TWICE FOR EVERY TIME HE GETS ON BASE!
I STARTED DRAWING HIM MYSELF!
HE PROBABLY HAD HIS NORMAL SHARE OF PERSONAL PROBLEMS.
HIS DIET OUT THERE ON THE PRARIE COULDNT HAVE BEEN VERY GOOD—NO FRESH FRUIT OR ANYTHING. IF YOUR BOWELS DONT MOVE IT'S HARD KEEPING YOUR GOOD HUMOR.
HE MIGHT HAVE EVEN HAD ETHICAL LAPSES, OF VARIOUS SORTS...
CHECK OUT TIME 10:30
Z
RACIAL PREJUDICE FOR EXAMPLE
AND AGGRESSIVE DISCRETION.
ME BEEN READING BOOK ON PSYCHOLOGY! YOU KNOW WHY YOU ALWAYS SHOOTING THAT GUN, KEMO-SAVVY? YOU AIN'T GOT NO LEAD IN YOUR PENCIL!
THAT'S ABOUT ENOUGH OF THAT.

TEN DOLLARS FOR TWO MINUTES

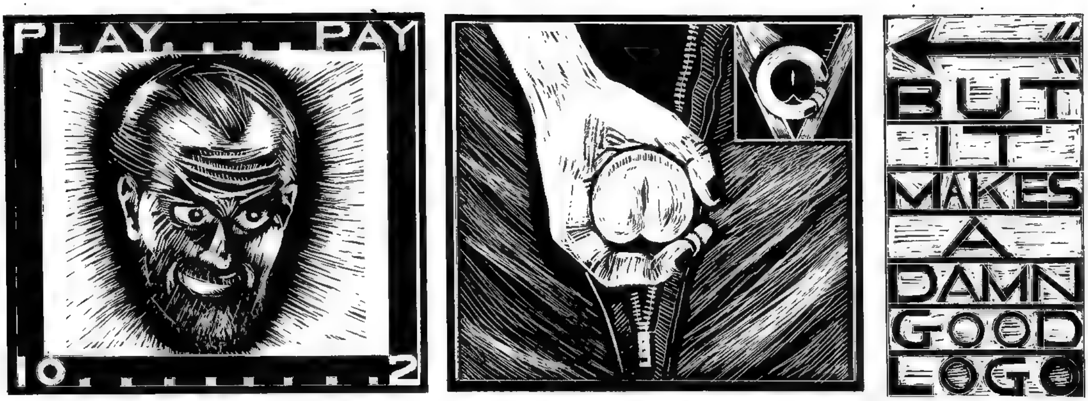
A TRUE STORY BY PENNY MORAN©


ZZZZ
HEY- YA WANNA "PLAY FOR PAY?"
WHADDAYA MEAN?

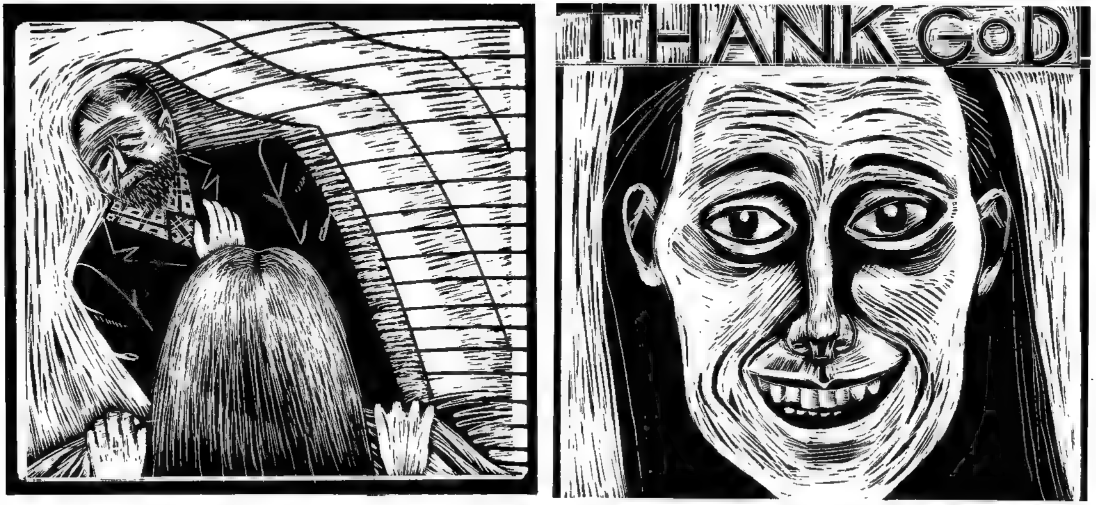
EARLY ONE WINTER MORNING I AWOKE TO FIND THE LOOMING FIGURE OF MY LANDLORD IN MY TRAILER. HE HAD LET HIMSELF IN. "I NEED TO CHECK THE ROOF FOR LEAKS," HE LIED. QUICKLY HE GOT TO THE POINT: "HEY," HE SAID, "YA WANNA 'PLAY FOR PAY'?"


C'MON GIMME A BLOW JOB I'LL GIVE YA TEN DOLLARS FOR TWO MINUTES
FORGET IT!

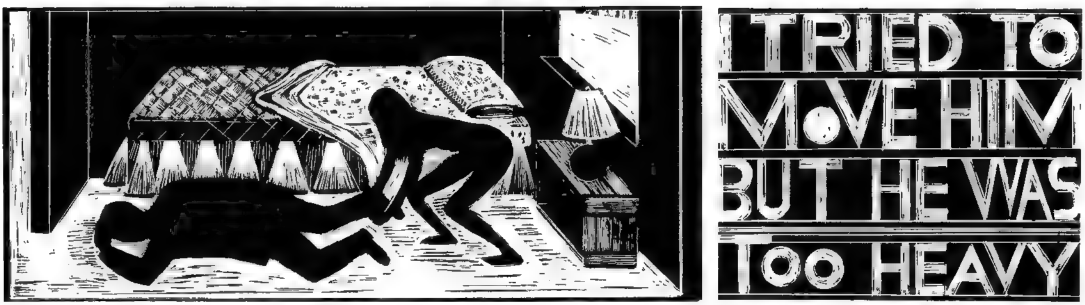
"I'LL GIVE YOU 10$ FOR 2 MINUTES." I REFUSED HIS OFFER. I WAS TRAPPED BENEATH THE COVERS WITHOUT ANY CLOTHES.


PLAY.... PAY
10........2
BUT IT MAKES A DAMN GOOD LOGO

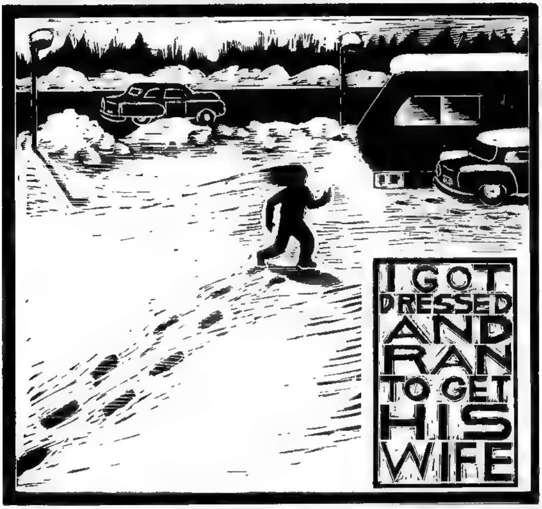
HIS PROPOSITION SOON BECAME A CHANT: PLAY FOR PAY / 10 FOR 2... HE PRANCED ABOUT ZIPPING AND UNZIPPING HIS PANTS. "WHAT AM I GONNA DO?" I ASKED MYSELF. SUDDENLY, HE FLUSHED, GRIMACED,

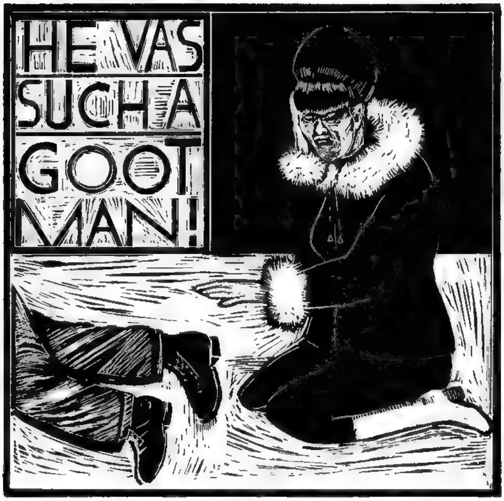


AND FELL TO THE FLOOR WITH A THUMP. "THANK GOD," I THOUGHT. I ASSUMED HE HAD FAINTED. I DRESSED AND WENT OVER TO FETCH

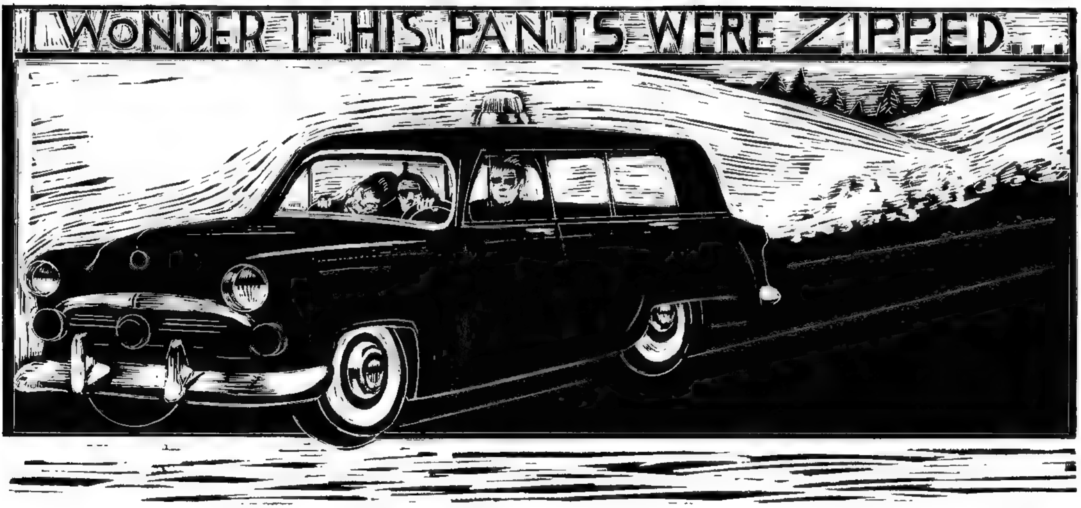

I TRIED TO MOVE HIM BUT HE WAS TOO HEAVY

HIS WIFE. "HE SHOULDN'T BE SHOVELING SNOW OFF THOSE ROOFS," SHE WHINED, "NOT WITH HIS HEART!" SHE KNELT BY HIS SIDE. WHEN WE REALIZED HE WAS DEAD, SHE WAILED


I GOT DRESSED AND RAN TO GET HIS WIFE


HE VAS SUCH A GOOT MAN!

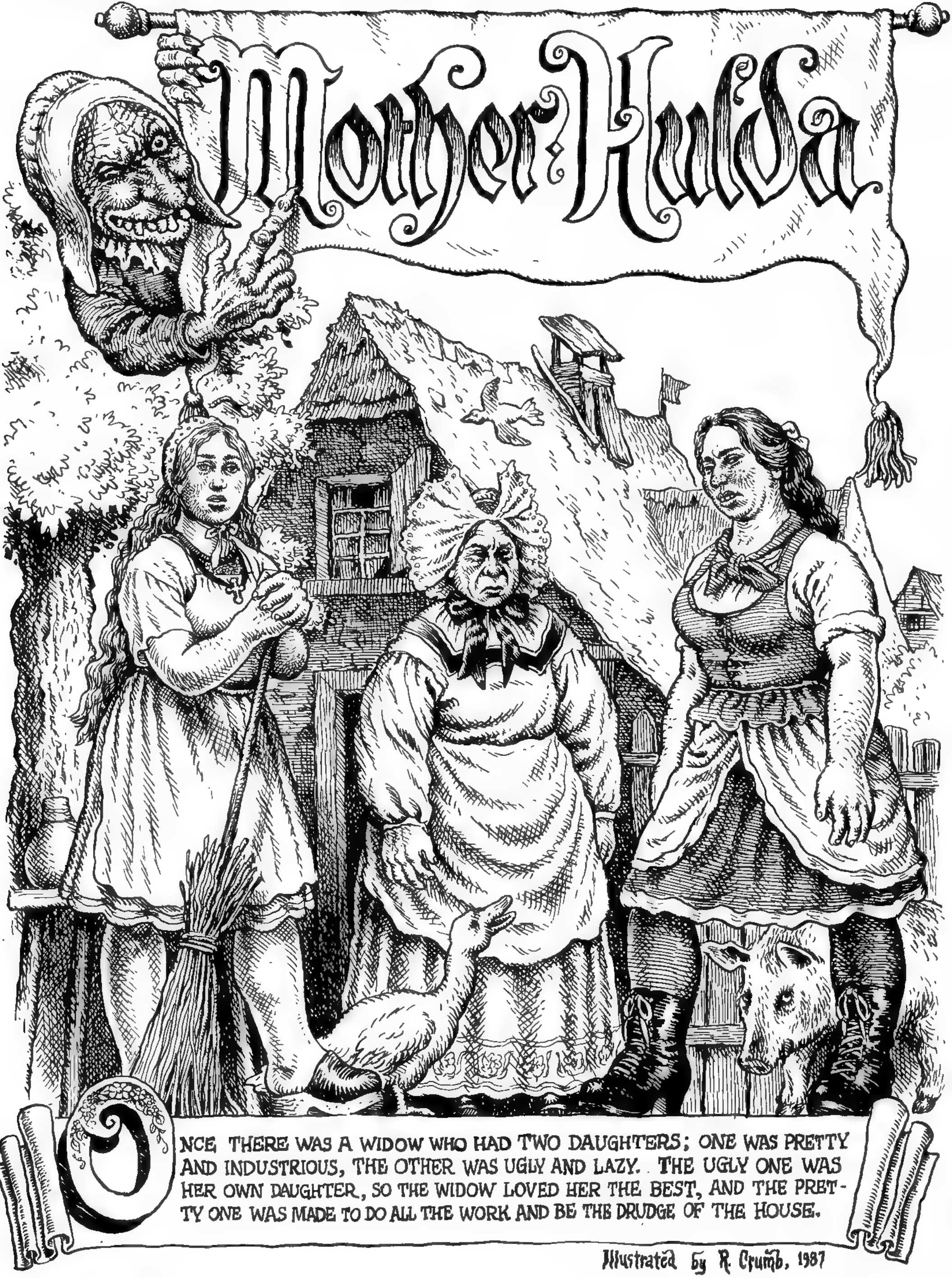
IN HER GERMAN ACCENT, "HE WAS SUCH A GOOD MAN!!!" ON THE WAY TO THE HOSPITAL IN THE AMBULANCE SHE CRIED ON MY SHOULDER. I FOUND MYSELF WONDERING IF HE'D DIED WITH HIS ZIPPER UP OR DOWN.


I WONDER IF HIS PANTS WERE ZIPPED...

AN INTERESTING FOOTNOTE: A COUPLE OF YEARS LATER, ONE OF MY FRIENDS SENT ME A NEWSPAPER CLIPPING ABOUT THE TWO OF THEM. THE HEADLINE READ: "ANGRY WIDOW FIGHTS TO CLEAR HUSBAND'S NAME." APPARENTLY, HE HAD BEEN CONVICTED OF TREASON DURING A RECENT WAR. "ON HIS DEATHBED," THE ARTICLE BEGAN, "MRS. X PROMISED HER HUSBAND SHE WOULD NOT REST UNTIL HIS NAME HAD BEEN CLEARED OF THE UNJUST TREASON ACCUSATION..." END ■

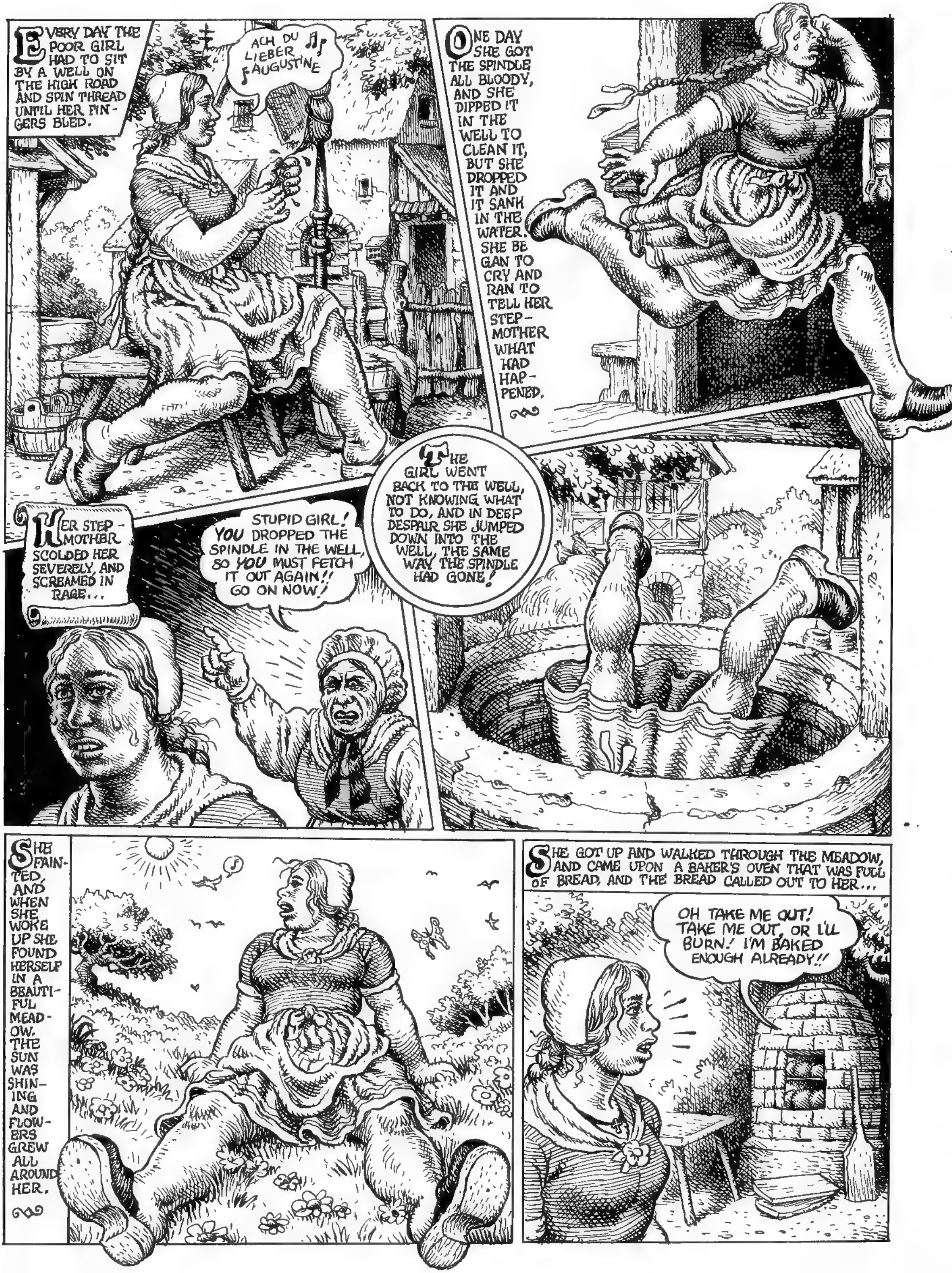
A "FAIRY TALE" COLLECTED BY THE BROTHERS GRIMM:

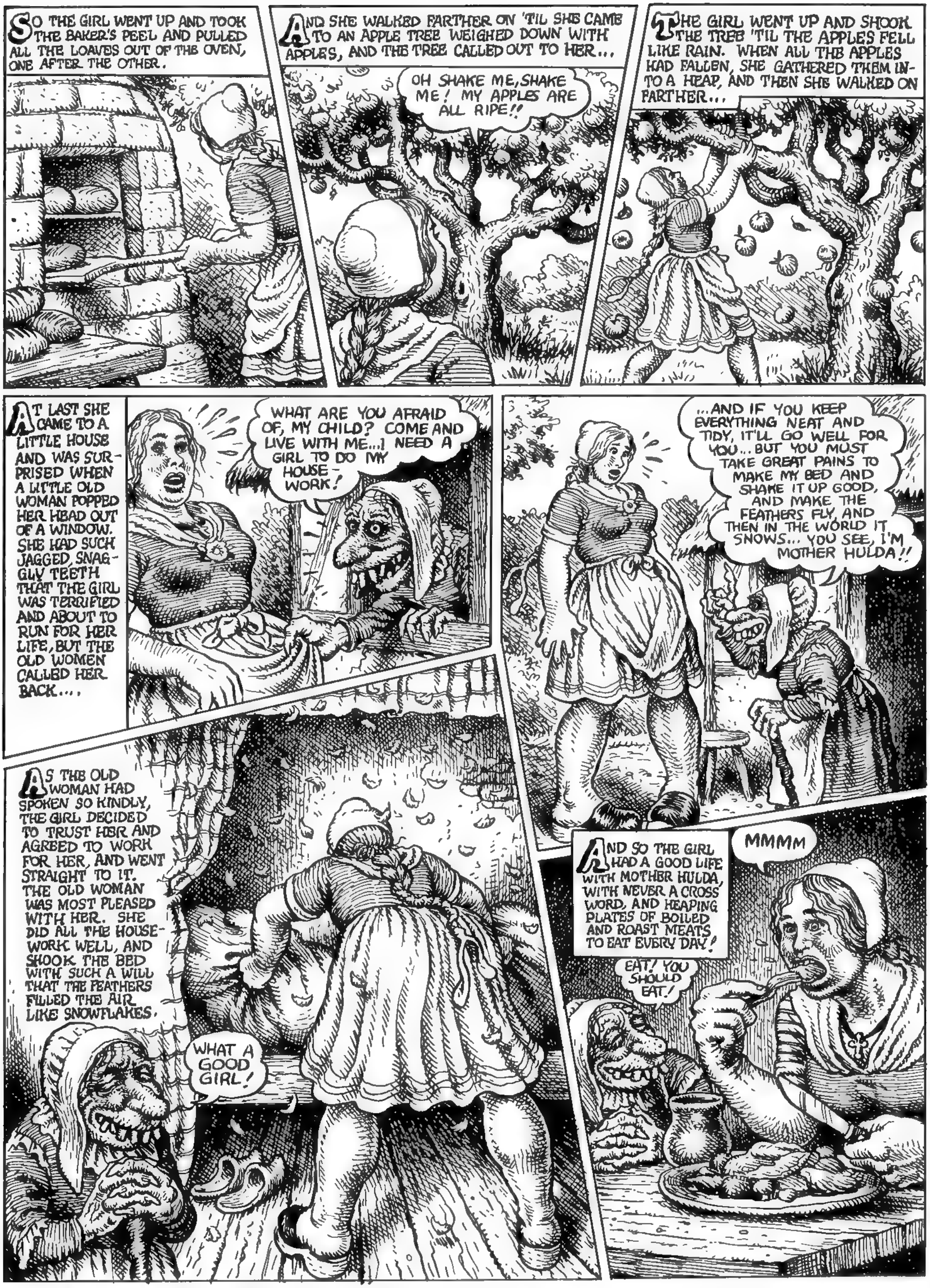
Mother Hulda

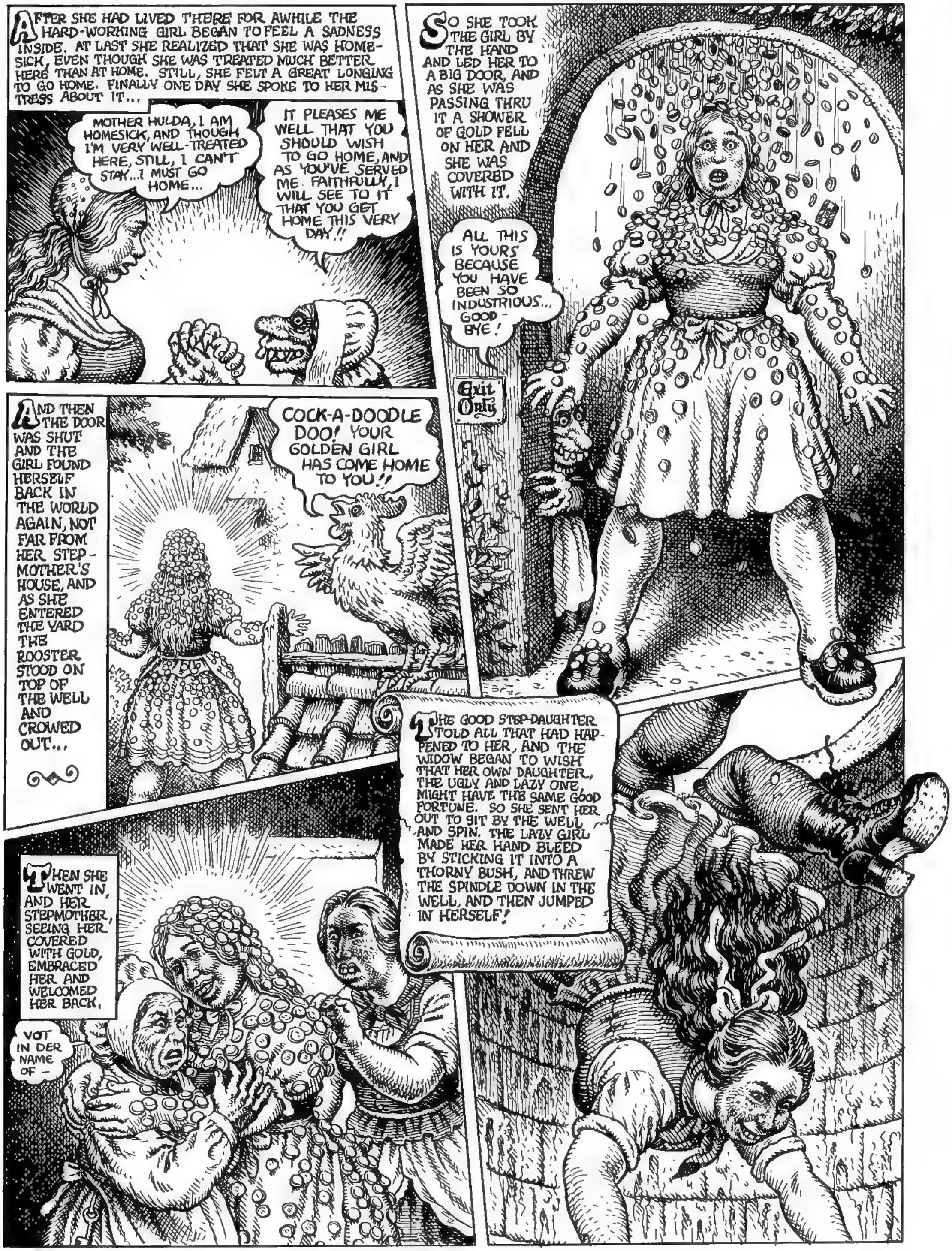


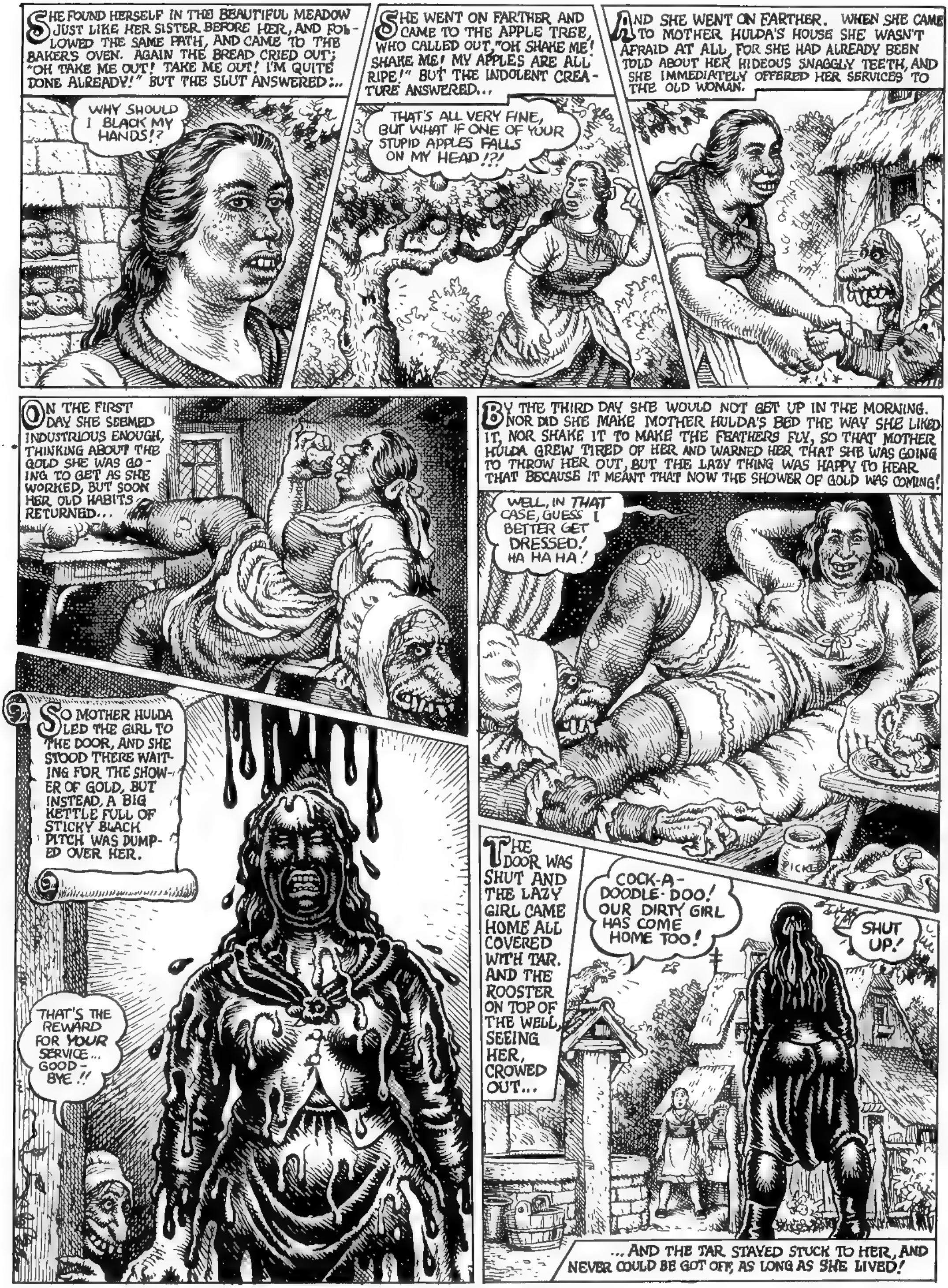
ONCE THERE WAS A WIDOW WHO HAD TWO DAUGHTERS; ONE WAS PRETTY AND INDUSTRIOUS, THE OTHER WAS UGLY AND LAZY. THE UGLY ONE WAS HER OWN DAUGHTER, SO THE WIDOW LOVED HER THE BEST, AND THE PRETTY ONE WAS MADE TO DO ALL THE WORK AND BE THE DRUDGE OF THE HOUSE.

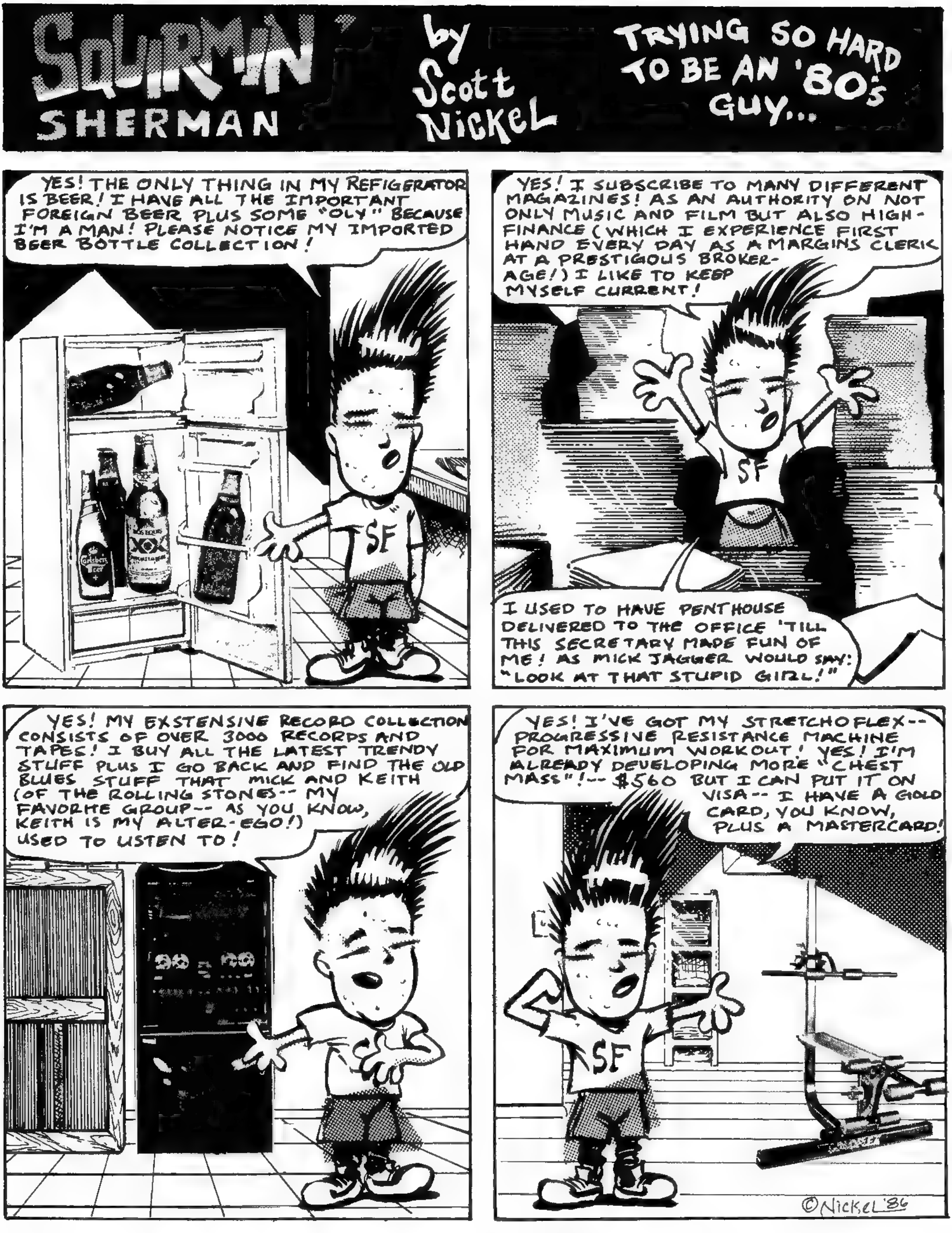
Illustrated by R. Crumb, 1987

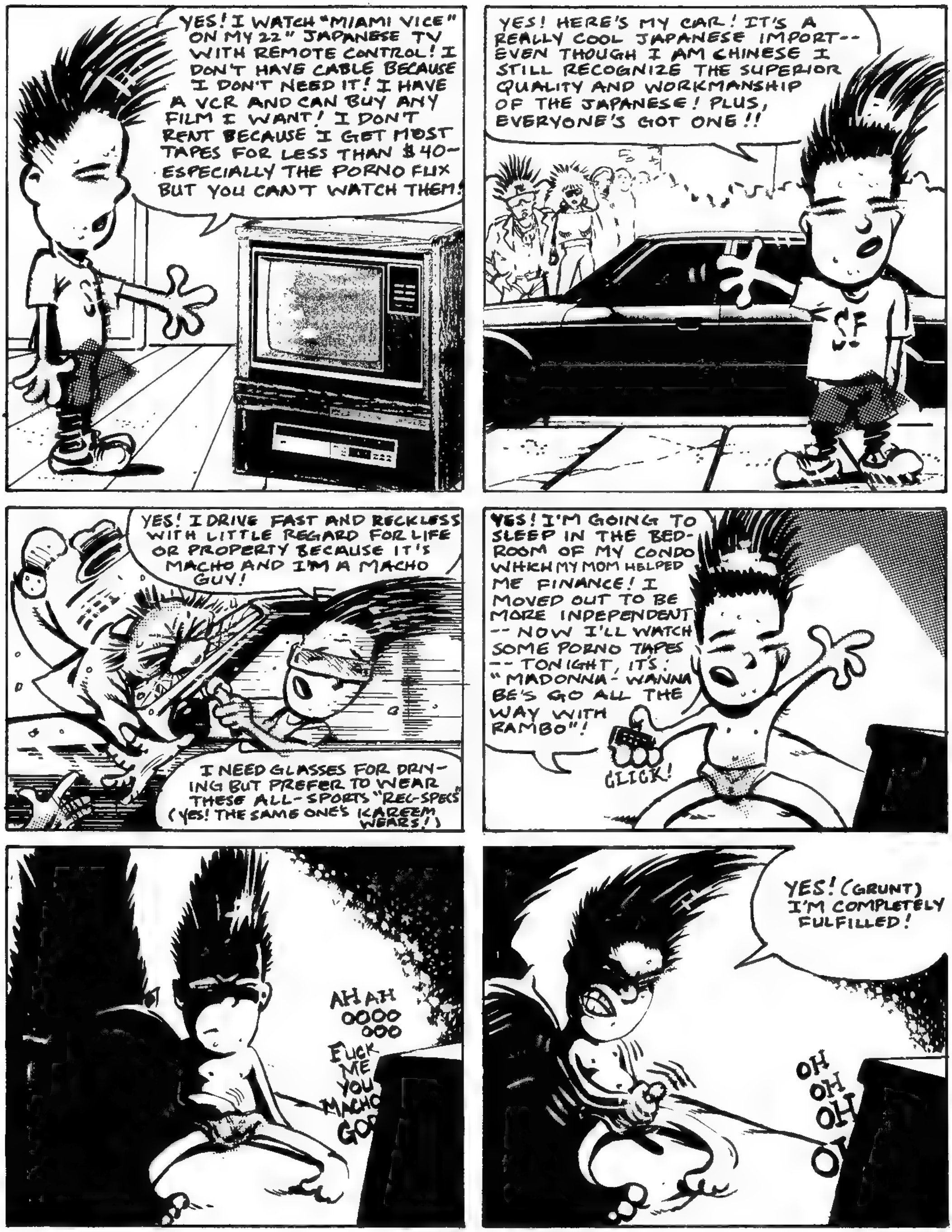

EVERY DAY THE POOR GIRL HAD TO SIT BY A WELL ON THE HIGH ROAD AND SPIN THREAD UNTIL HER FINGERS BLED.
ACH DU LIEBER AUGUSTINE ♪
ONE DAY SHE GOT THE SPINDLE ALL BLOODY, AND SHE DIPPED IT IN THE WELL TO CLEAN IT, BUT SHE DROPPED IT AND IT SANK IN THE WATER. SHE BEGAN TO CRY AND RAN TO TELL HER STEPMOTHER WHAT HAD HAPPENED.
HER STEPMOTHER SCOLDED HER SEVERELY, AND SCREAMED IN RAGE...
STUPID GIRL! YOU DROPPED THE SPINDLE IN THE WELL, SO YOU MUST FETCH IT OUT AGAIN!! GO ON NOW!
THE GIRL WENT BACK TO THE WELL, NOT KNOWING WHAT TO DO, AND IN DEEP DESPAIR SHE JUMPED DOWN INTO THE WELL, THE SAME WAY THE SPINDLE HAD GONE!
SHE FAINTED, AND WHEN SHE WOKE UP SHE FOUND HERSELF IN A BEAUTIFUL MEADOW. THE SUN WAS SHINING AND FLOWERS GREW ALL AROUND HER.
SHE GOT UP AND WALKED THROUGH THE MEADOW, AND CAME UPON A BAKER'S OVEN THAT WAS FULL OF BREAD, AND THE BREAD CALLED OUT TO HER...
OH TAKE ME OUT! TAKE ME OUT, OR I'LL BURN! I'M BAKED ENOUGH ALREADY!!


SO THE GIRL WENT UP AND TOOK THE BAKER'S PEEL AND PULLED ALL THE LOAVES OUT OF THE OVEN, ONE AFTER THE OTHER.
AND SHE WALKED FARTHER ON 'TIL SHE CAME TO AN APPLE TREE WEIGHED DOWN WITH APPLES, AND THE TREE CALLED OUT TO HER...
OH SHAKE ME, SHAKE ME! MY APPLES ARE ALL RIPE!!
THE GIRL WENT UP AND SHOOK THE TREE 'TIL THE APPLES FELL LIKE RAIN. WHEN ALL THE APPLES HAD FALLEN, SHE GATHERED THEM INTO A HEAP, AND THEN SHE WALKED ON FARTHER...
AT LAST SHE CAME TO A LITTLE HOUSE AND WAS SURPRISED WHEN A LITTLE OLD WOMAN POPPED HER HEAD OUT OF A WINDOW. SHE HAD SUCH JAGGED, SNAGGLY TEETH THAT THE GIRL WAS TERRIFIED AND ABOUT TO RUN FOR HER LIFE, BUT THE OLD WOMEN CALLED HER BACK....
WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF, MY CHILD? COME AND LIVE WITH ME...I NEED A GIRL TO DO MY HOUSEWORK!
...AND IF YOU KEEP EVERYTHING NEAT AND TIDY, IT'LL GO WELL FOR YOU... BUT YOU MUST TAKE GREAT PAINS TO MAKE MY BED AND SHAKE IT UP GOOD, AND MAKE THE FEATHERS FLY, AND THEN IN THE WORLD IT SNOWS... YOU SEE, I'M MOTHER HULDA!!
AS THE OLD WOMAN HAD SPOKEN SO KINDLY, THE GIRL DECIDED TO TRUST HER AND AGREED TO WORK FOR HER, AND WENT STRAIGHT TO IT. THE OLD WOMAN WAS MOST PLEASED WITH HER. SHE DID ALL THE HOUSEWORK WELL, AND SHOOK THE BED WITH SUCH A WILL THAT THE FEATHERS FILLED THE AIR LIKE SNOWFLAKES.
WHAT A GOOD GIRL!
AND SO THE GIRL HAD A GOOD LIFE WITH MOTHER HULDA, WITH NEVER A CROSS WORD, AND HEAPING PLATES OF BOILED AND ROAST MEATS TO EAT EVERY DAY!
MMMM
EAT! YOU SHOULD EAT!


AFTER SHE HAD LIVED THERE FOR AWHILE THE HARD-WORKING GIRL BEGAN TO FEEL A SADNESS INSIDE. AT LAST SHE REALIZED THAT SHE WAS HOMESICK, EVEN THOUGH SHE WAS TREATED MUCH BETTER HERE THAN AT HOME. STILL, SHE FELT A GREAT LONGING TO GO HOME. FINALLY ONE DAY SHE SPOKE TO HER MISTRESS ABOUT IT...
MOTHER HULDA, I AM HOMESICK, AND THOUGH I'M VERY WELL-TREATED HERE, STILL, I CAN'T STAY...I MUST GO HOME...
IT PLEASES ME WELL THAT YOU SHOULD WISH TO GO HOME, AND AS YOU'VE SERVED ME FAITHFULLY, I WILL SEE TO IT THAT YOU GET HOME THIS VERY DAY!!
SO SHE TOOK THE GIRL BY THE HAND AND LED HER TO A BIG DOOR, AND AS SHE WAS PASSING THRU IT A SHOWER OF GOLD FELL ON HER AND SHE WAS COVERED WITH IT.
ALL THIS IS YOURS BECAUSE YOU HAVE BEEN SO INDUSTRIOUS... GOOD-BYE!
Exit Only
AND THEN THE DOOR WAS SHUT AND THE GIRL FOUND HERSELF BACK IN THE WORLD AGAIN, NOT FAR FROM HER STEPMOTHER'S HOUSE, AND AS SHE ENTERED THE YARD THE ROOSTER STOOD ON TOP OF THE WELL AND CROWED OUT...
COCK-A-DOODLE DOO! YOUR GOLDEN GIRL HAS COME HOME TO YOU!!
THEN SHE WENT IN, AND HER STEPMOTHER, SEEING HER COVERED WITH GOLD, EMBRACED HER AND WELCOMED HER BACK.
VOT IN DER NAME OF –
THE GOOD STEP-DAUGHTER TOLD ALL THAT HAD HAPPENED TO HER, AND THE WIDOW BEGAN TO WISH THAT HER OWN DAUGHTER, THE UGLY AND LAZY ONE, MIGHT HAVE THE SAME GOOD FORTUNE. SO SHE SENT HER OUT TO SIT BY THE WELL AND SPIN. THE LAZY GIRL MADE HER HAND BLEED BY STICKING IT INTO A THORNY BUSH, AND THREW THE SPINDLE DOWN IN THE WELL, AND THEN JUMPED IN HERSELF!

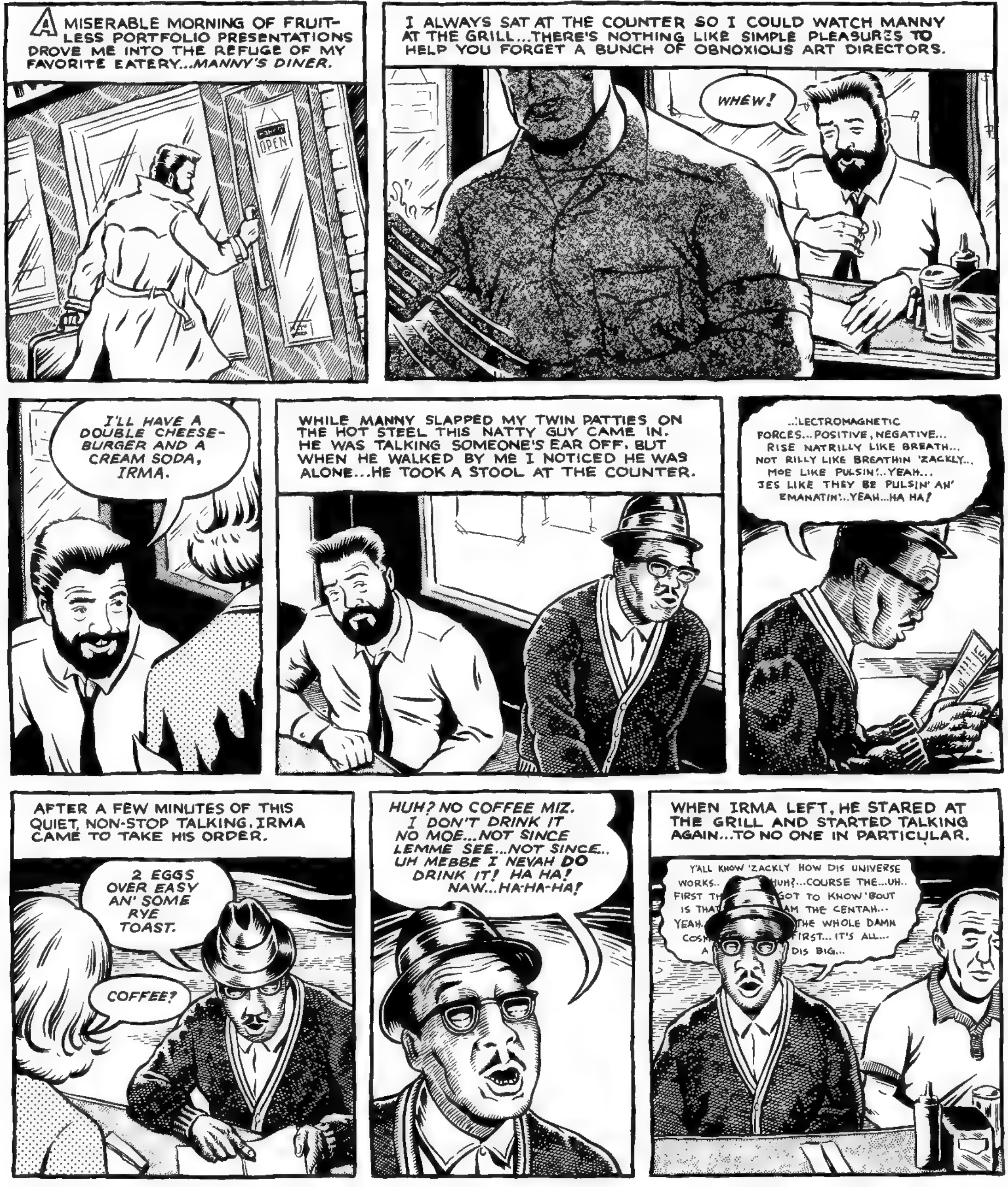

SHE FOUND HERSELF IN THE BEAUTIFUL MEADOW JUST LIKE HER SISTER BEFORE HER, AND FOLLOWED THE SAME PATH, AND CAME TO THE BAKER'S OVEN. AGAIN THE BREAD CRIED OUT; "OH TAKE ME OUT! TAKE ME OUT! I'M QUITE DONE ALREADY!" BUT THE SLUT ANSWERED:...
WHY SHOULD I BLACK MY HANDS!?
SHE WENT ON FARTHER AND CAME TO THE APPLE TREE, WHO CALLED OUT, "OH SHAKE ME! SHAKE ME! MY APPLES ARE ALL RIPE!" BUT THE INDOLENT CREATURE ANSWERED...
THAT'S ALL VERY FINE, BUT WHAT IF ONE OF YOUR STUPID APPLES FALLS ON MY HEAD!?!
AND SHE WENT ON FARTHER. WHEN SHE CAME TO MOTHER HULDA'S HOUSE SHE WASN'T AFRAID AT ALL, FOR SHE HAD ALREADY BEEN TOLD ABOUT HER HIDEOUS SNAGGLY TEETH, AND SHE IMMEDIATELY OFFERED HER SERVICES TO THE OLD WOMAN.
ON THE FIRST DAY SHE SEEMED INDUSTRIOUS ENOUGH, THINKING ABOUT THE GOLD SHE WAS GOING TO GET AS SHE WORKED, BUT SOON HER OLD HABITS RETURNED...
BY THE THIRD DAY SHE WOULD NOT GET UP IN THE MORNING. NOR DID SHE MAKE MOTHER HULDA'S BED THE WAY SHE LIKED IT, NOR SHAKE IT TO MAKE THE FEATHERS FLY, SO THAT MOTHER HULDA GREW TIRED OF HER AND WARNED HER THAT SHE WAS GOING TO THROW HER OUT, BUT THE LAZY THING WAS HAPPY TO HEAR THAT BECAUSE IT MEANT THAT NOW THE SHOWER OF GOLD WAS COMING!
WELL, IN THAT CASE, GUESS I BETTER GET DRESSED! HA HA HA!
PICKLE
SO MOTHER HULDA LED THE GIRL TO THE DOOR, AND SHE STOOD THERE WAITING FOR THE SHOWER OF GOLD, BUT INSTEAD, A BIG KETTLE FULL OF STICKY BLACK PITCH WAS DUMPED OVER HER.
THAT'S THE REWARD FOR YOUR SERVICE... GOOD-BYE!!
THE DOOR WAS SHUT AND THE LAZY GIRL CAME HOME ALL COVERED WITH TAR. AND THE ROOSTER ON TOP OF THE WELL, SEEING HER, CROWED OUT...
COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO! OUR DIRTY GIRL HAS COME HOME TOO!
SHUT UP!
...AND THE TAR STAYED STUCK TO HER, AND NEVER COULD BE GOT OFF, AS LONG AS SHE LIVED!

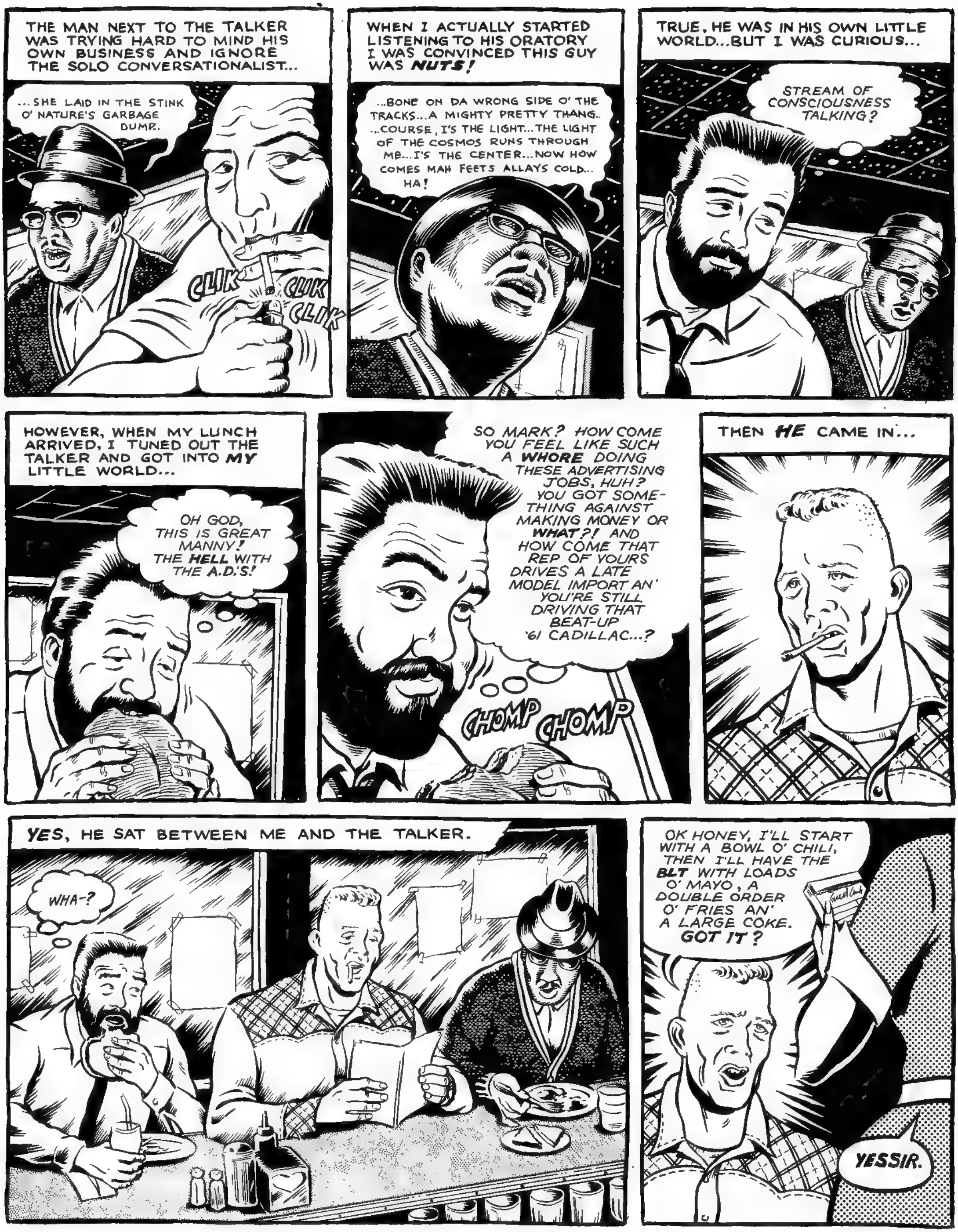

SQUIRMIN' SHERMAN
by Scott Nickel
TRYING SO HARD TO BE AN '80's GUY...
YES! THE ONLY THING IN MY REFIGERATOR IS BEER! I HAVE ALL THE IMPORTANT FOREIGN BEER PLUS SOME "OLY" BECAUSE I'M A MAN! PLEASE NOTICE MY IMPORTED BEER BOTTLE COLLECTION!
Carlsberg Beer
DOS EQUIS XX
SF
YES! I SUBSCRIBE TO MANY DIFFERENT MAGAZINES! AS AN AUTHORITY ON NOT ONLY MUSIC AND FILM BUT ALSO HIGH-FINANCE (WHICH I EXPERIENCE FIRST HAND EVERY DAY AS A MARGINS CLERK AT A PRESTIGIOUS BROKERAGE!) I LIKE TO KEEP MYSELF CURRENT!
SF
I USED TO HAVE PENTHOUSE DELIVERED TO THE OFFICE 'TILL THIS SECRETARY MADE FUN OF ME! AS MICK JAGGER WOULD SAY: "LOOK AT THAT STUPID GIRL!"
YES! MY EXSTENSIVE RECORD COLLECTION CONSISTS OF OVER 3000 RECORDS AND TAPES! I BUY ALL THE LATEST TRENDY STUFF PLUS I GO BACK AND FIND THE OLD BLUES STUFF THAT MICK AND KEITH (OF THE ROLLING STONES-- MY FAVORITE GROUP-- AS YOU KNOW, KEITH IS MY ALTER-EGO!) USED TO LISTEN TO!
SF
YES! I'VE GOT MY STRETCHOFLEX-- PROGRESSIVE RESISTANCE MACHINE FOR MAXIMUM WORKOUT! YES! I'M ALREADY DEVELOPING MORE "CHEST MASS"!-- $560 BUT I CAN PUT IT ON VISA-- I HAVE A GOLD CARD, YOU KNOW, PLUS A MASTERCARD!
SF
©NICKEL '86

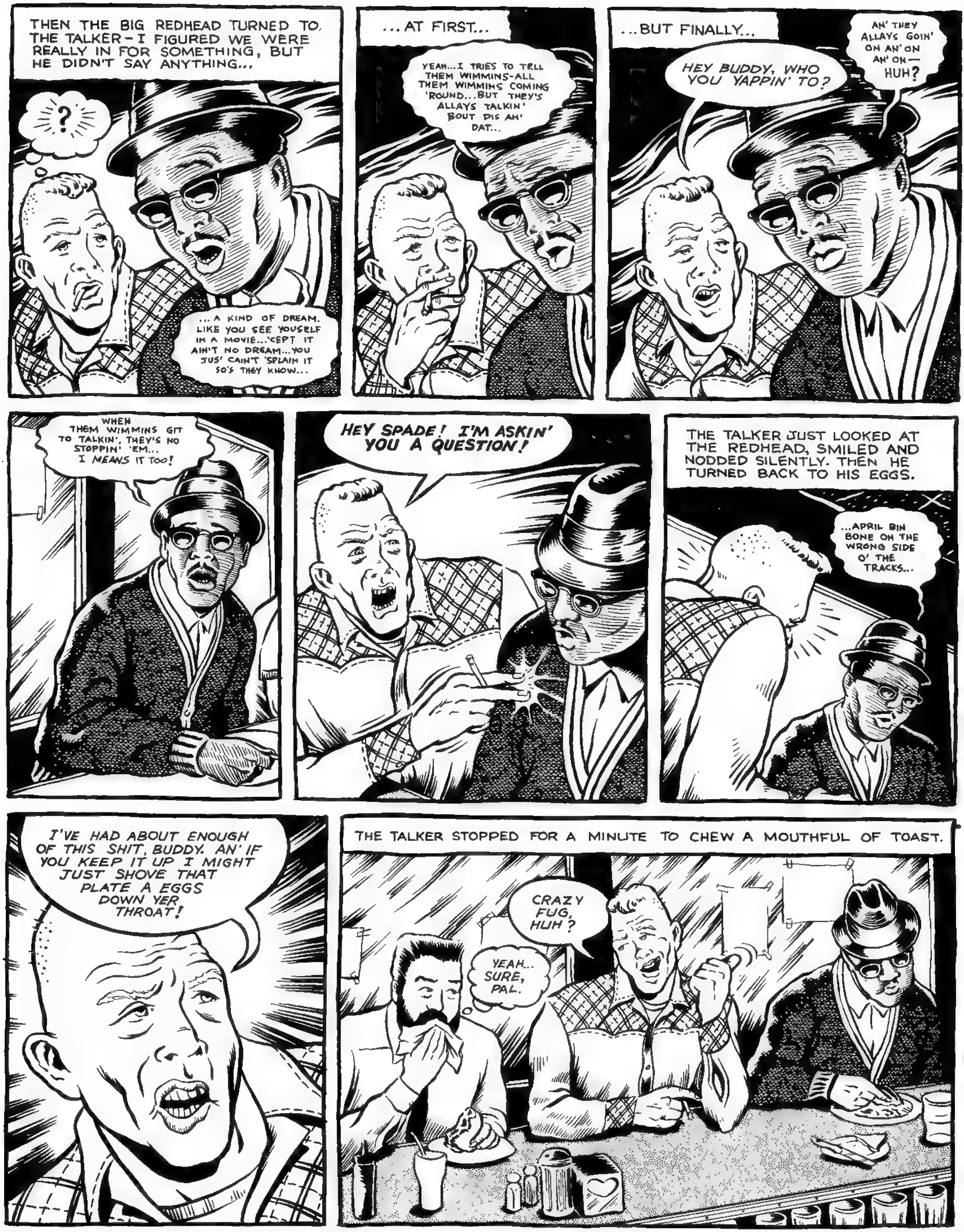

YES! I WATCH "MIAMI VICE" ON MY 22" JAPANESE TV WITH REMOTE CONTROL! I DON'T HAVE CABLE BECAUSE I DON'T NEED IT! I HAVE A VCR AND CAN BUY ANY FILM I WANT! I DON'T RENT BECAUSE I GET MOST TAPES FOR LESS THAN $40- ESPECIALLY THE PORNO FLIX BUT YOU CAN'T WATCH THEM!
SF
YES! HERE'S MY CAR! IT'S A REALLY COOL JAPANESE IMPORT-- EVEN THOUGH I AM CHINESE I STILL RECOGNIZE THE SUPERIOR QUALITY AND WORKMANSHIP OF THE JAPANESE! PLUS, EVERYONE'S GOT ONE!!
SF
YES! I DRIVE FAST AND RECKLESS WITH LITTLE REGARD FOR LIFE OR PROPERTY BECAUSE IT'S MACHO AND I'M A MACHO GUY!
I NEED GLASSES FOR DRIVING BUT PREFER TO WEAR THESE ALL-SPORTS "REC-SPECS" (YES! THE SAME ONE'S KAREEM WEARS!)
YES! I'M GOING TO SLEEP IN THE BEDROOM OF MY CONDO WHICH MY MOM HELPED ME FINANCE! I MOVED OUT TO BE MORE INDEPENDENT -- NOW I'LL WATCH SOME PORNO TAPES -- TONIGHT, IT'S: "MADONNA-WANNA BE'S GO ALL THE WAY WITH RAMBO"!
CLICK!
AH AH OOOO OOO
FUCK ME YOU MACHO GO
YES! (GRUNT) I'M COMPLETELY FULFILLED!
OH OH OH OH

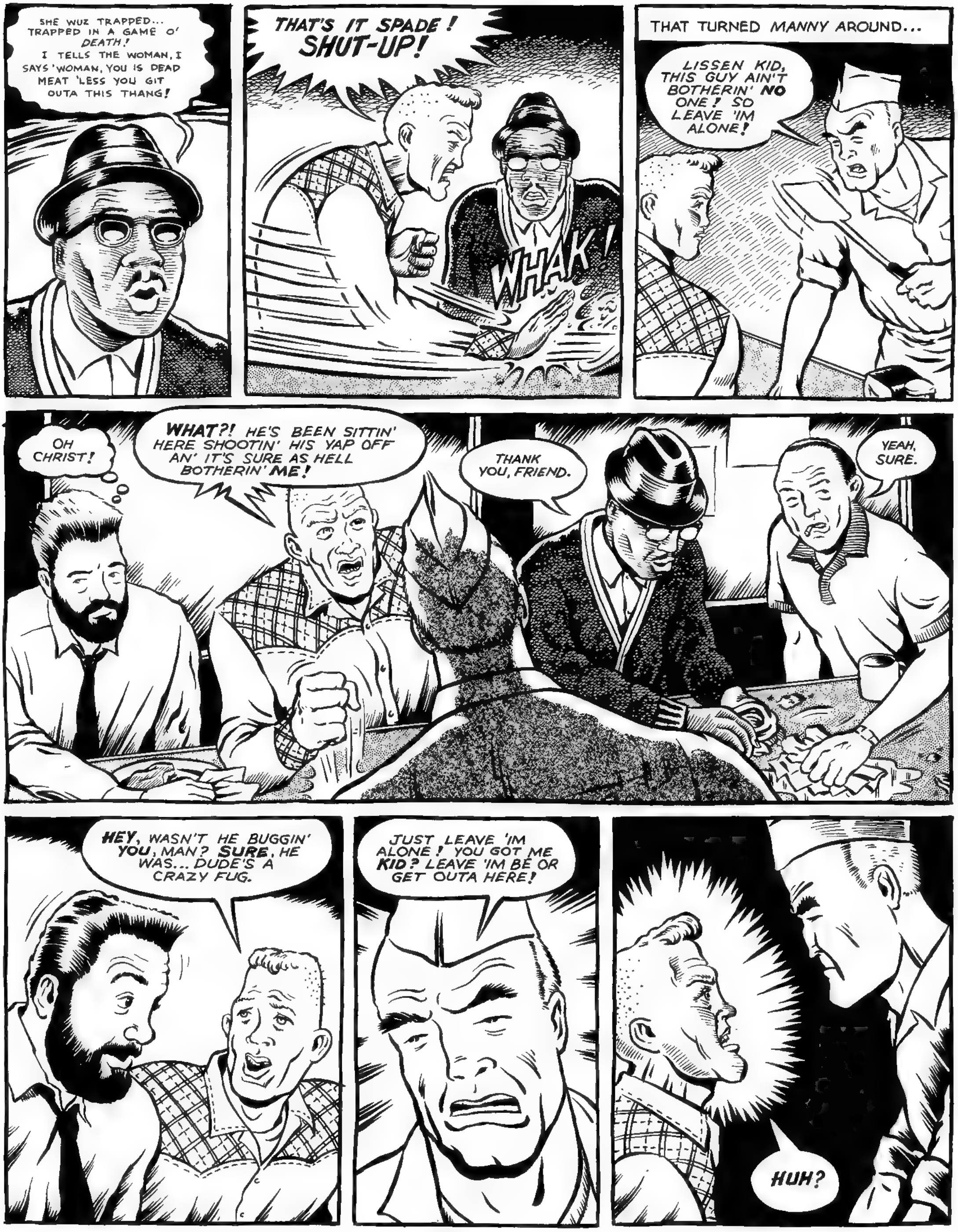
THE TALKER

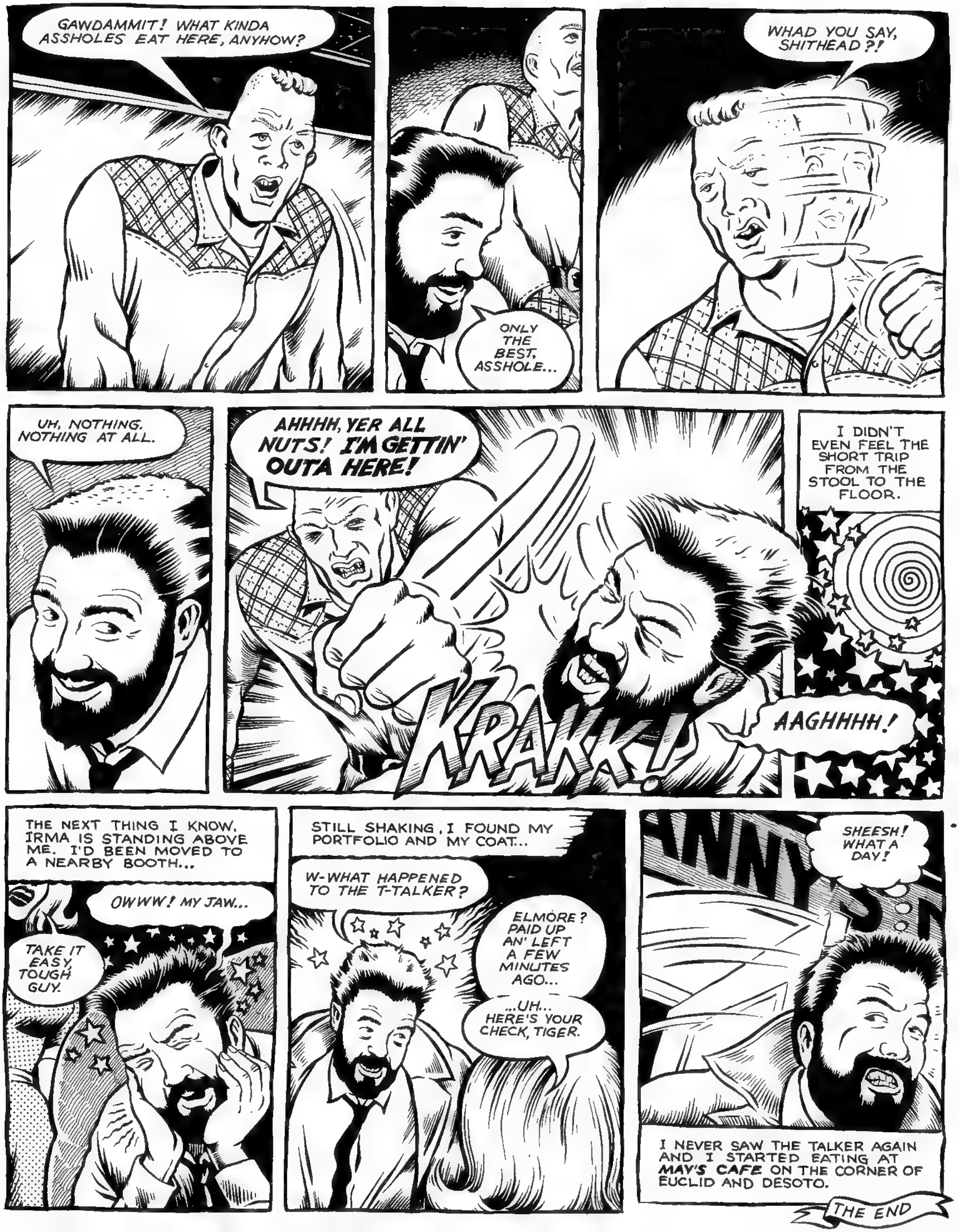
MARK A. ZINGARELLI

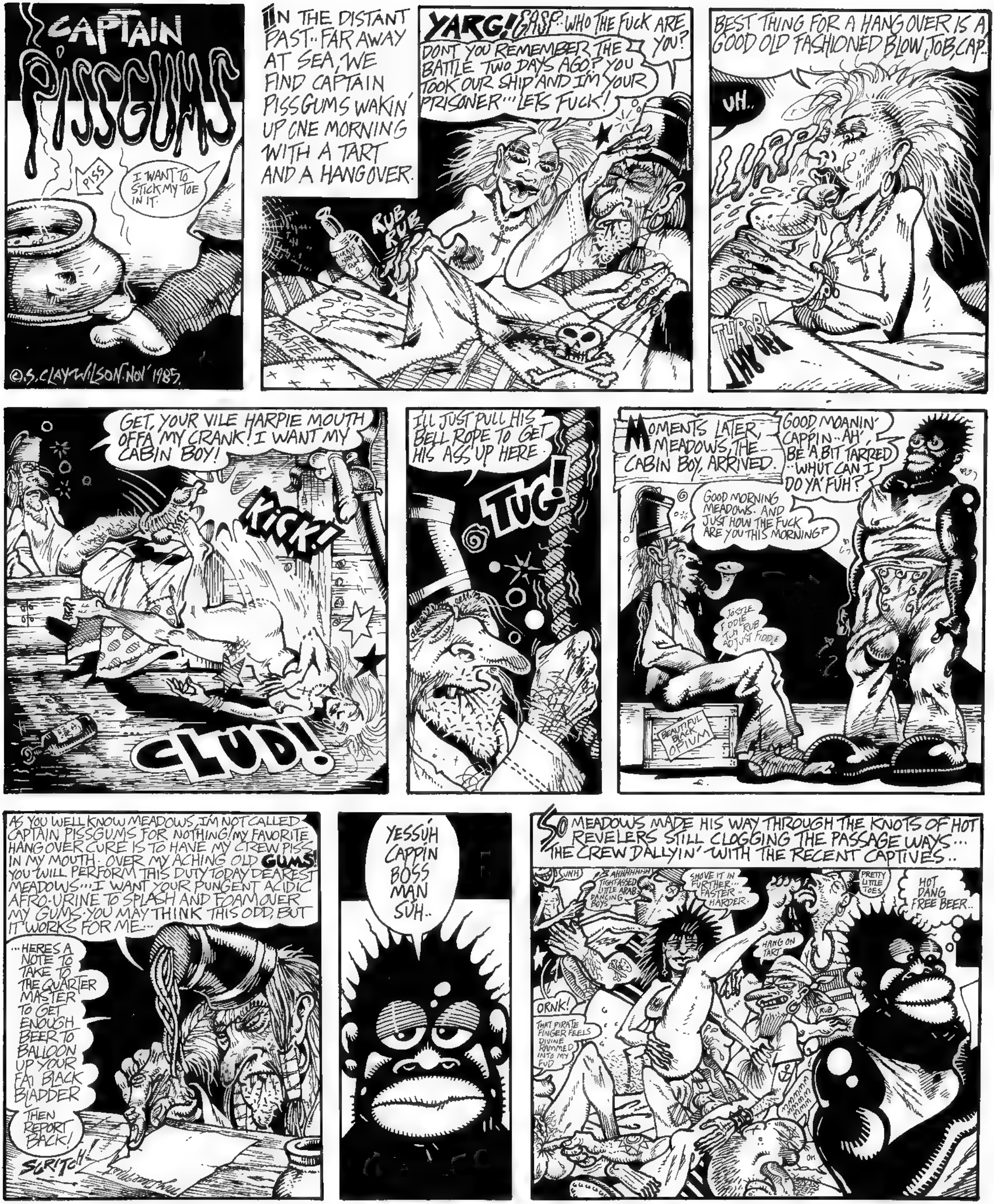

A MISERABLE MORNING OF FRUITLESS PORTFOLIO PRESENTATIONS DROVE ME INTO THE REFUGE OF MY FAVORITE EATERY...*MANNY'S DINER.*
OPEN
I ALWAYS SAT AT THE COUNTER SO I COULD WATCH MANNY AT THE GRILL...THERE'S NOTHING LIKE SIMPLE PLEASURES TO HELP YOU FORGET A BUNCH OF OBNOXIOUS ART DIRECTORS.
WHEW!
I'LL HAVE A DOUBLE CHEESEBURGER AND A CREAM SODA, IRMA.
WHILE MANNY SLAPPED MY TWIN PATTIES ON THE HOT STEEL THIS NATTY GUY CAME IN. HE WAS TALKING SOMEONE'S EAR OFF. BUT WHEN HE WALKED BY ME I NOTICED HE WAS ALONE...HE TOOK A STOOL AT THE COUNTER.
...'LECTROMAGNETIC FORCES...POSITIVE, NEGATIVE... RISE NATRILLY LIKE BREATH... NOT RILLY LIKE BREATHIN 'ZACKLY... MOE LIKE PULSIN'...YEAH... JES LIKE THEY BE PULSIN' AN' EMANATIN'...YEAH...HA HA!
AFTER A FEW MINUTES OF THIS QUIET, NON-STOP TALKING, IRMA CAME TO TAKE HIS ORDER.
2 EGGS OVER EASY AN' SOME RYE TOAST.
COFFEE?
HUH? NO COFFEE MIZ. I DON'T DRINK IT NO MOE...NOT SINCE LEMME SEE...NOT SINCE... UH MEBBE I NEVAH **DO** *DRINK IT! HA HA! NAW...HA-HA-HA!*
WHEN IRMA LEFT, HE STARED AT THE GRILL AND STARTED TALKING AGAIN...TO NO ONE IN PARTICULAR.
Y'ALL KNOW 'ZACKLY HOW DIS UNIVERSE WORKS.. HUH?...COURSE THE...UH.. FIRST TH GOT TO KNOW 'BOUT IS THAT AM THE CENTAH... YEAH. THE WHOLE DAMN COSM FIRST... IT'S ALL... A DIS BIG...

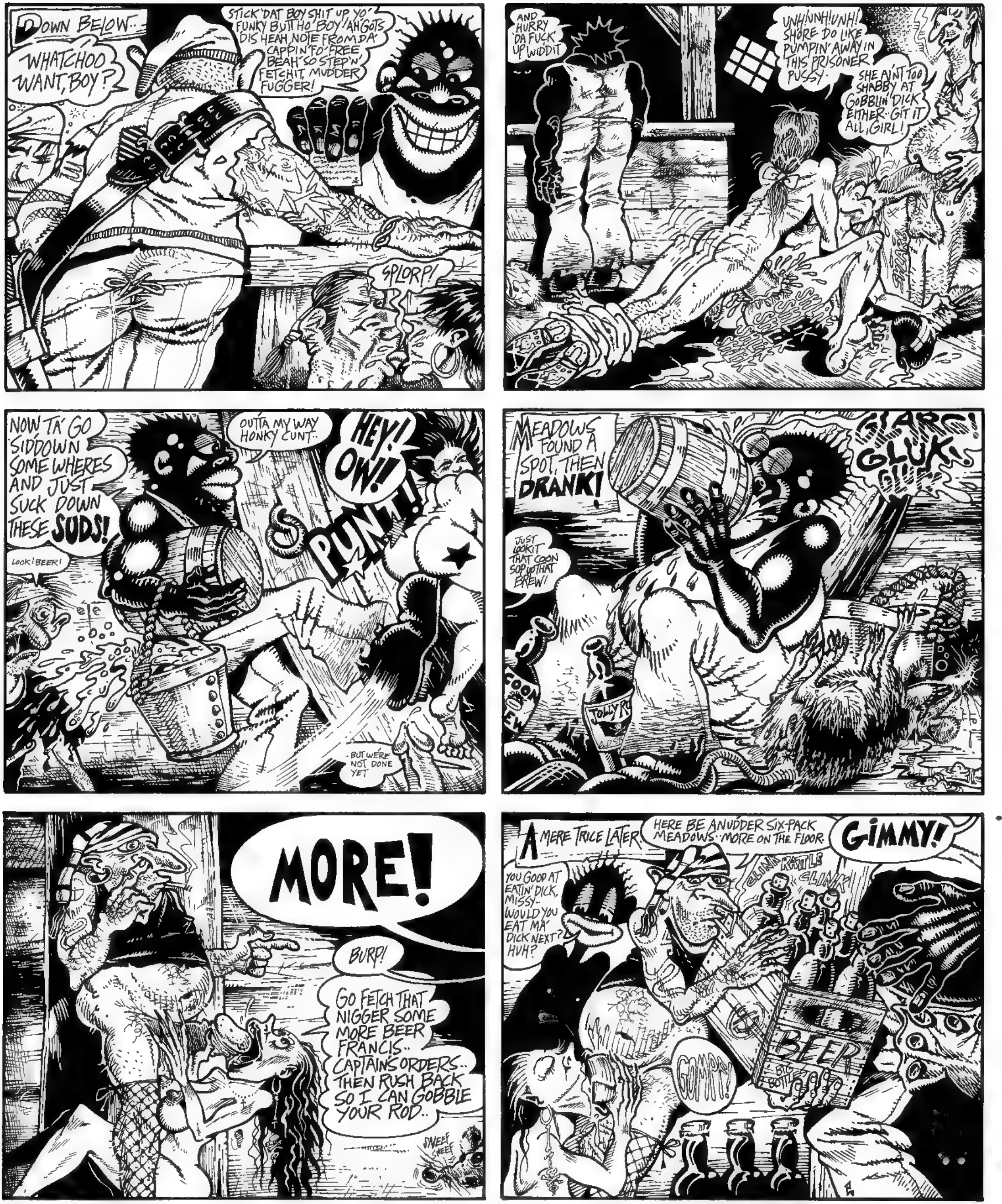

THE MAN NEXT TO THE TALKER WAS TRYING HARD TO MIND HIS OWN BUSINESS AND IGNORE THE SOLO CONVERSATIONALIST...
...SHE LAID IN THE STINK O' NATURE'S GARBAGE DUMP.
CLIK CLIK CLIK
WHEN I ACTUALLY STARTED LISTENING TO HIS ORATORY I WAS CONVINCED THIS GUY WAS NUTS!
...BONE ON DA WRONG SIDE O' THE TRACKS...A MIGHTY PRETTY THANG.. ...COURSE, I'S THE LIGHT...THE LIGHT OF THE COSMOS RUNS THROUGH ME...I'S THE CENTER...NOW HOW COMES MAH FEETS ALLAYS COLD... HA!
TRUE, HE WAS IN HIS OWN LITTLE WORLD...BUT I WAS CURIOUS...
STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS TALKING?
HOWEVER, WHEN MY LUNCH ARRIVED, I TUNED OUT THE TALKER AND GOT INTO MY LITTLE WORLD...
OH GOD, THIS IS GREAT MANNY! THE HELL WITH THE A.D.'S!
SO MARK? HOW COME YOU FEEL LIKE SUCH A WHORE DOING THESE ADVERTISING JOBS, HUH? YOU GOT SOMETHING AGAINST MAKING MONEY OR WHAT?! AND HOW COME THAT REP OF YOURS DRIVES A LATE MODEL IMPORT AN' YOU'RE STILL DRIVING THAT BEAT-UP '61 CADILLAC...?
CHOMP CHOMP
THEN HE CAME IN...
YES, HE SAT BETWEEN ME AND THE TALKER.
WHA-?
OK HONEY, I'LL START WITH A BOWL O' CHILI, THEN I'LL HAVE THE BLT WITH LOADS O' MAYO, A DOUBLE ORDER O' FRIES AN' A LARGE COKE. GOT IT?
YESSIR.

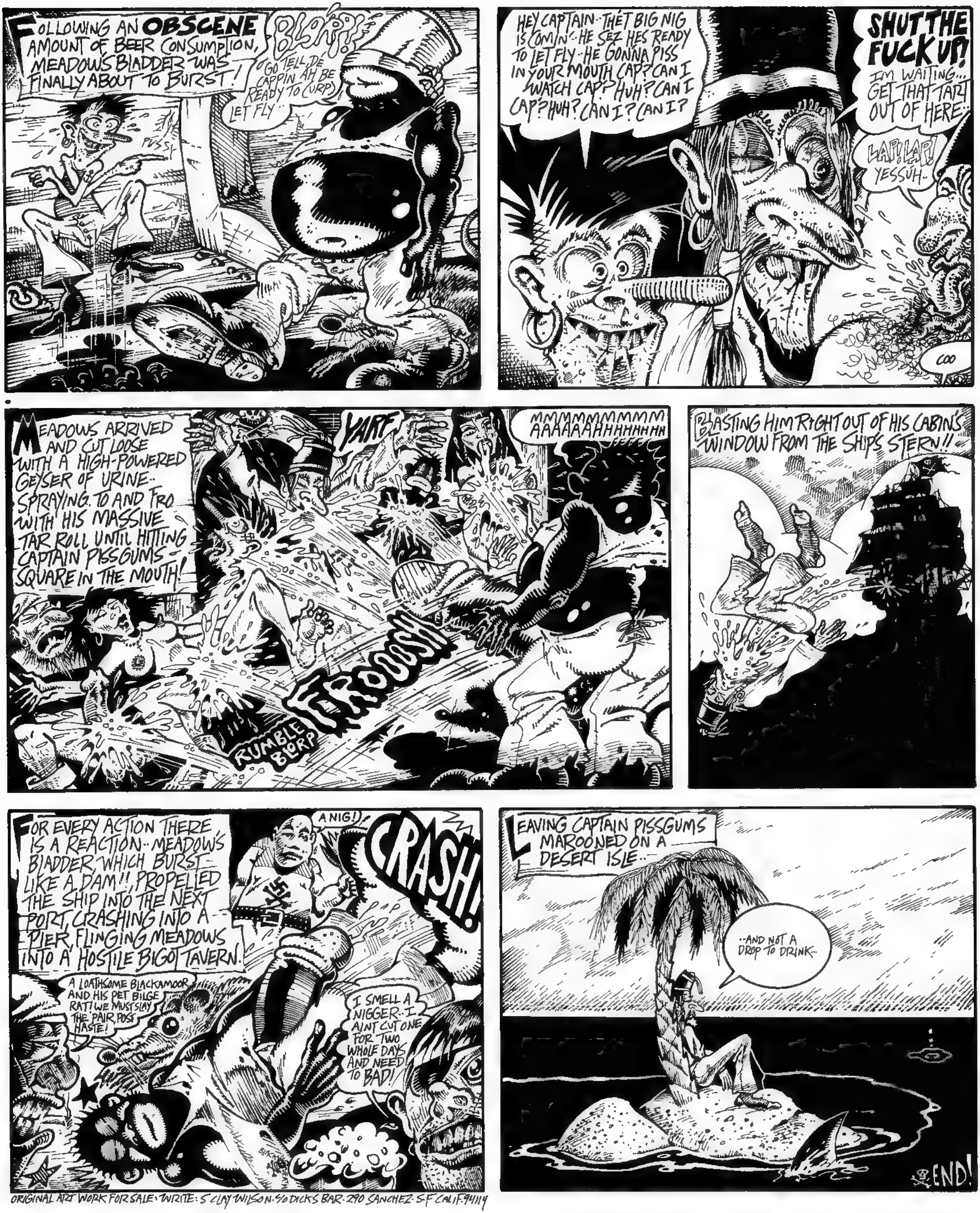

THEN THE BIG REDHEAD TURNED TO THE TALKER - I FIGURED WE WERE REALLY IN FOR SOMETHING, BUT HE DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING...
?
...A KIND OF DREAM. LIKE YOU SEE YOUSELF IN A MOVIE...'CEPT IT AIN'T NO DREAM...YOU JUS' CAIN'T 'SPLAIN IT SO'S THEY KNOW...
...AT FIRST...
YEAH...I TRIES TO TELL THEM WIMMINS-ALL THEM WIMMINS COMING 'ROUND...BUT THEY'S ALLAYS TALKIN' BOUT DIS AN' DAT...
...BUT FINALLY...
HEY BUDDY, WHO YOU YAPPIN' TO?
AN' THEY ALLAYS GOIN' ON AN' ON AN' ON — HUH?
WHEN THEM WIMMINS GIT TO TALKIN', THEY'S NO STOPPIN' 'EM... I *MEANS* IT TOO!
HEY SPADE! I'M ASKIN' YOU A QUESTION!
THE TALKER JUST LOOKED AT THE REDHEAD, SMILED AND NODDED SILENTLY. THEN HE TURNED BACK TO HIS EGGS.
...APRIL BIN BONE ON THE WRONG SIDE O' THE TRACKS...
I'VE HAD ABOUT ENOUGH OF THIS SHIT, BUDDY. AN' IF YOU KEEP IT UP I MIGHT JUST SHOVE THAT PLATE A EGGS DOWN YER THROAT!
THE TALKER STOPPED FOR A MINUTE TO CHEW A MOUTHFUL OF TOAST.
CRAZY FUG, HUH?
YEAH... SURE, PAL.


SHE WUZ TRAPPED... TRAPPED IN A GAME O' DEATH! I TELLS THE WOMAN, I SAYS 'WOMAN, YOU IS DEAD MEAT 'LESS YOU GIT OUTA THIS THANG!
THAT'S IT SPADE! SHUT-UP!
WHAK!
THAT TURNED MANNY AROUND...
LISSEN KID, THIS GUY AIN'T BOTHERIN' NO ONE! SO LEAVE 'IM ALONE!
OH CHRIST!
WHAT?! HE'S BEEN SITTIN' HERE SHOOTIN' HIS YAP OFF AN' IT'S SURE AS HELL BOTHERIN' ME!
THANK YOU, FRIEND.
YEAH, SURE.
HEY, WASN'T HE BUGGIN' YOU, MAN? SURE, HE WAS... DUDE'S A CRAZY FUG.
JUST LEAVE 'IM ALONE! YOU GOT ME KID? LEAVE 'IM BE OR GET OUTA HERE!
HUH?

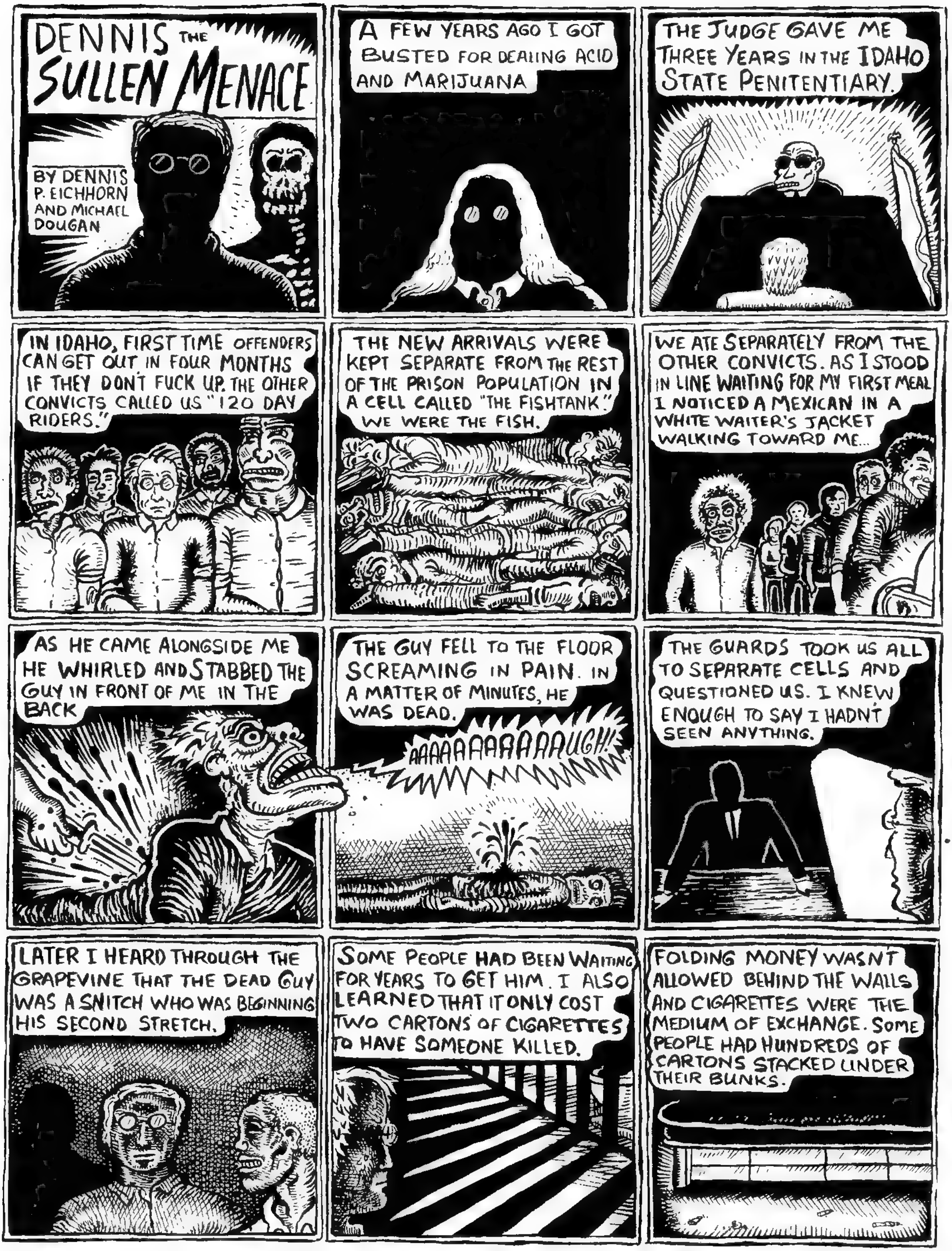

GAWDAMMIT! WHAT KINDA ASSHOLES EAT HERE, ANYHOW?
ONLY THE BEST, ASSHOLE...
WHAD YOU SAY, SHITHEAD?!
UH, NOTHING. NOTHING AT ALL.
AHHHH, YER ALL NUTS! I'M GETTIN' OUTA HERE!
KRAKK!
AAGHHHH!
I DIDN'T EVEN FEEL THE SHORT TRIP FROM THE STOOL TO THE FLOOR.
THE NEXT THING I KNOW, IRMA IS STANDING ABOVE ME. I'D BEEN MOVED TO A NEARBY BOOTH...
OWWW! MY JAW...
TAKE IT EASY, TOUGH GUY.
STILL SHAKING, I FOUND MY PORTFOLIO AND MY COAT...
W-WHAT HAPPENED TO THE T-TALKER?
ELMORE? PAID UP AN' LEFT A FEW MINUTES AGO...
...UH... HERE'S YOUR CHECK, TIGER.
SHEESH! WHAT A DAY!
I NEVER SAW THE TALKER AGAIN AND I STARTED EATING AT MAY'S CAFE ON THE CORNER OF EUCLID AND DESOTO.
THE END

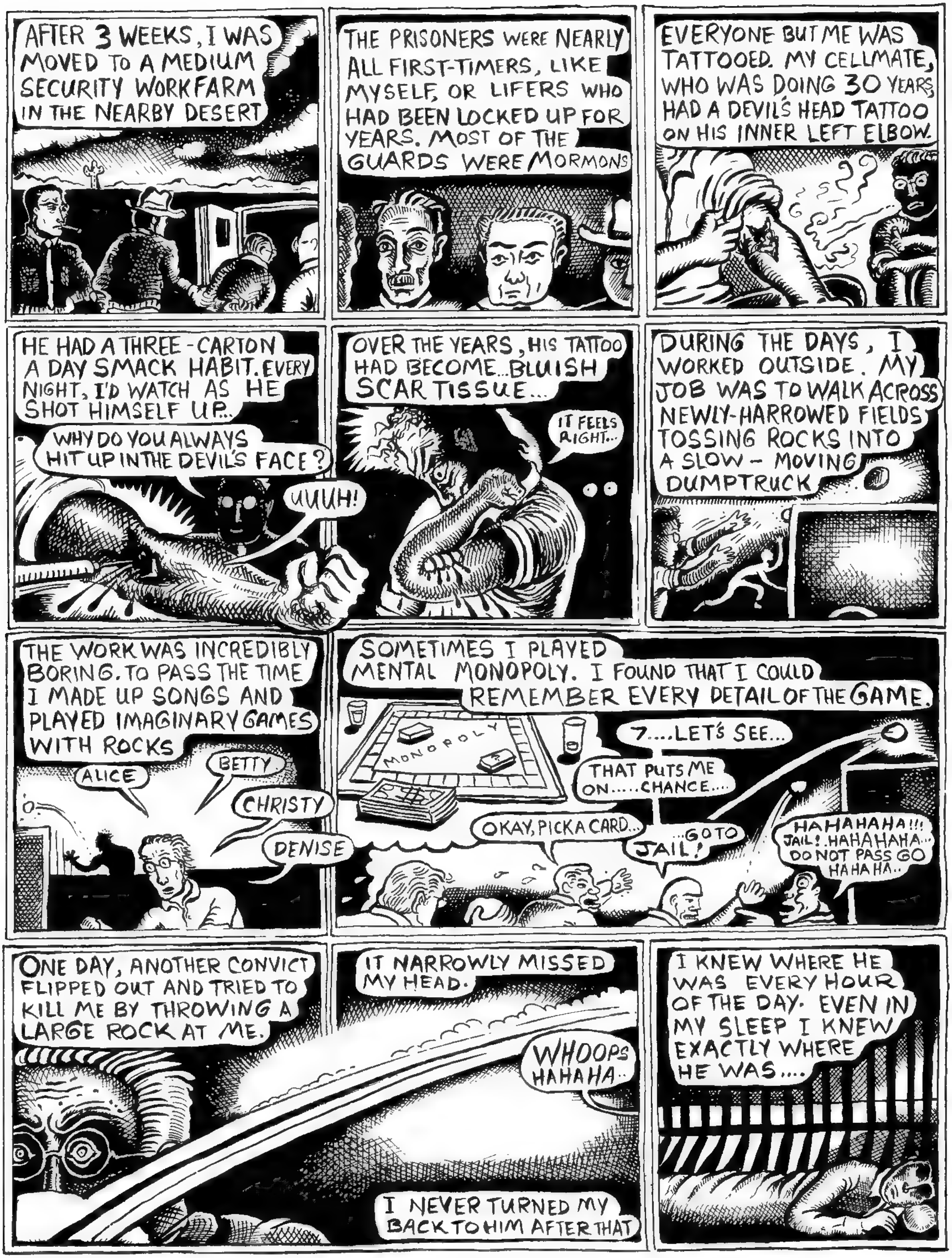

CAPTAIN PISSGUMS
PISS
I WANT TO STICK MY TOE IN IT.
©S. CLAY WILSON. NOV' 1985.
IN THE DISTANT PAST.. FAR AWAY AT SEA, WE FIND CAPTAIN PISSGUMS WAKIN' UP ONE MORNING WITH A TART AND A HANGOVER.
YARG! GASP. WHO THE FUCK ARE YOU?
DONT YOU REMEMBER THE BATTLE TWO DAYS AGO? YOU TOOK OUR SHIP AND I'M YOUR PRISONER... LETS FUCK!
KICKASS NAVY RUM
RUB RUB
PEE PEE PYRATES
BEST THING FOR A HANG OVER IS A GOOD OLD FASHIONED BLOW JOB, CAP..
UH..
LURP
THROB! THROB!
GET, YOUR VILE HARPIE MOUTH OFFA MY CRANK! I WANT MY CABIN BOY!
KICK!
CLUD!
I'LL JUST PULL HIS BELL ROPE TO GET HIS ASS UP HERE.
TUG!
MOMENTS LATER, MEADOWS, THE CABIN BOY, ARRIVED.
GOOD MOANIN' CAPPIN.. AH' BE A BIT TARRED ..WHUT CAN I DO YA' FUH?
GOOD MORNING MEADOWS. AND JUST HOW THE FUCK ARE YOU THIS MORNING?
JOSTLE FODLE TUH RUB ADJUST FIDDLE
BEAUTIFUL BLACK OPIUM
AS YOU WELL KNOW MEADOWS, I'M NOT CALLED CAPTAIN PISSGUMS FOR NOTHING! MY FAVORITE HANGOVER CURE IS TO HAVE MY CREW PISS IN MY MOUTH.. OVER MY ACHING OLD GUMS! YOU WILL PERFORM THIS DUTY TODAY DEAREST MEADOWS... I WANT YOUR PUNGENT ACIDIC AFRO-URINE TO SPLASH AND FOAM OVER MY GUMS. YOU MAY THINK THIS ODD, BUT IT WORKS FOR ME...
...HERES A NOTE TO TAKE TO THE QUARTER MASTER TO GET ENOUGH BEER TO BALLOON UP YOUR FAT BLACK BLADDER
THEN REPORT BACK!
SCRITCH!
YESSUH CAPPIN BOSS MAN SUH..
SO MEADOWS MADE HIS WAY THROUGH THE KNOTS OF HOT REVELERS STILL CLOGGING THE PASSAGE WAYS... THE CREW DALLYIN' WITH THE RECENT CAPTIVES..
UNH
AHHHHHHH TIGHTASSED LITTLE ARAB DANCING BOYS
SHOVE IT IN FURTHER... FASTER.. HARDER.
PRETTY LITTLE TOES
HOT DANG FREE BEER..
HANG ON TART
ORNK!
THAT PIRATE FINGER FEELS DIVINE RAMMED INTO MY FUD
RUB
MMMMMM MMMMM MMMM
OH

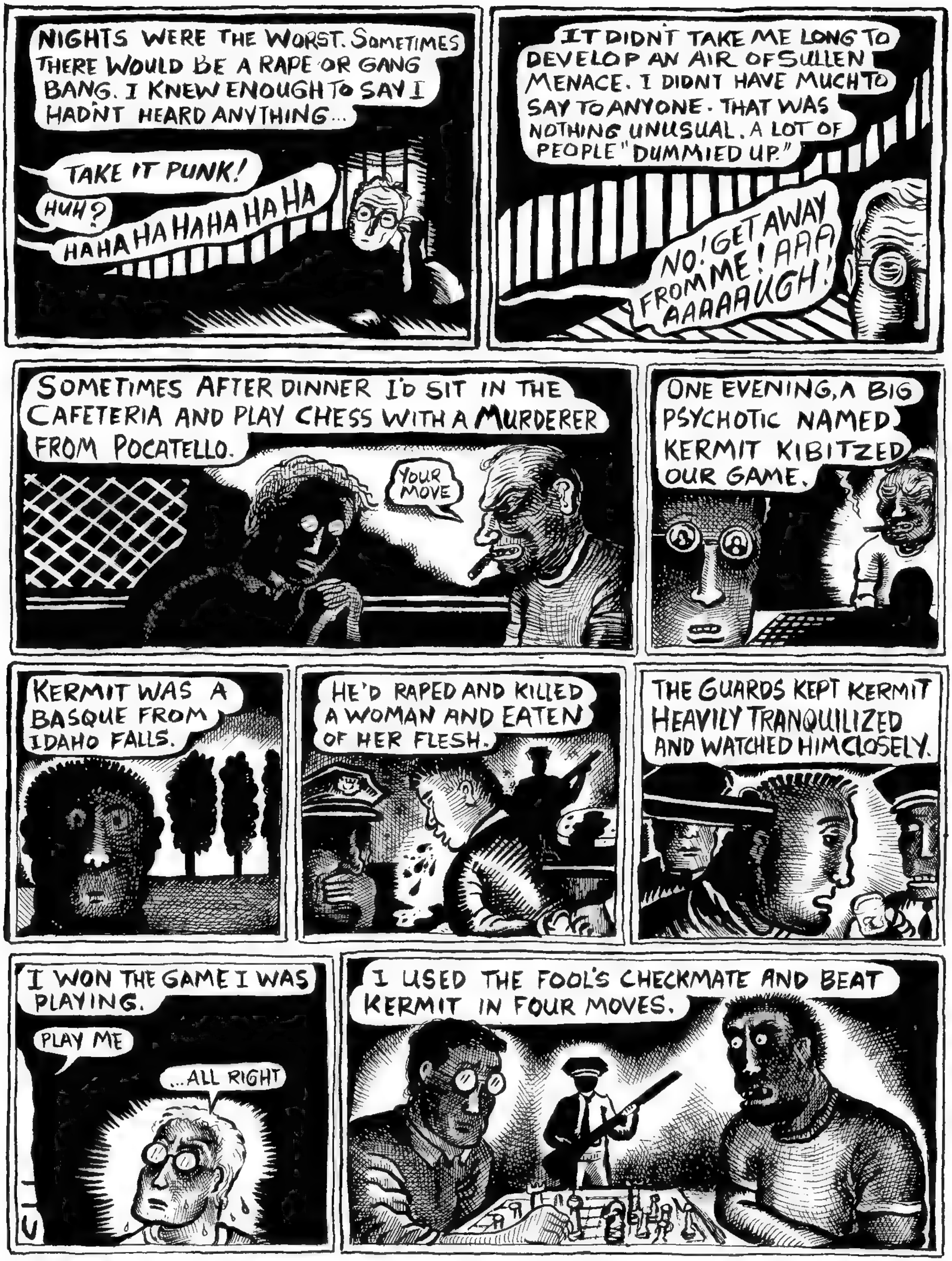

DOWN BELOW..
WHATCHOO WANT, BOY?
STICK 'DAT BOY SHIT UP YO' FUNKY BUTT HO' BOY 'AH GOTS DIS HEAH NOTE FROM DA' CAPPIN' FO' FREE BEAH' SO STEP 'N' FETCH IT, MUDDER FUGGER!
SPLORP!
AND HURRY 'DA FUCK' UP WIDD IT
UNH! UNH! UNH! SHORE DO LIKE PUMPIN' AWAY IN THIS PRISONER PUSSY.
SHE AIN'T TOO SHABBY AT GOBBLIN' DICK EITHER.. GIT IT ALL, GIRL!
NOW TA' GO SIDDOWN SOME WHERES AND JUST SUCK DOWN THESE SUDS!
OUTTA MY WAY HONKY CUNT.
HEY! OW!
PUNT!
LOOK! BEER!
.. BUT WE'RE NOT DONE YET
MEADOWS FOUND A SPOT, THEN DRANK!
GLARG! GLUK! GLUP!
JUST LOOKIT THAT COON SOP UP THAT BREW!
COON BREW
JOLLY RO
MORE!
BURP!
GO FETCH THAT NIGGER SOME MORE BEER FRANCIS.. CAPTAIN'S ORDERS.. THEN RUSH BACK SO I CAN GOBBLE YOUR ROD..
SNEEF SNEEF
A MERE TRICE LATER.
HERE BE ANUDDER SIX-PACK MEADOWS.. MORE ON THE FLOOR.
GIMMY!
YOU GOOD AT EATIN' DICK, MISSY.. WOULD YOU EAT MA' DICK NEXT? HUH?
CLINK RATTLE CLINK
GOMPF!
BEER

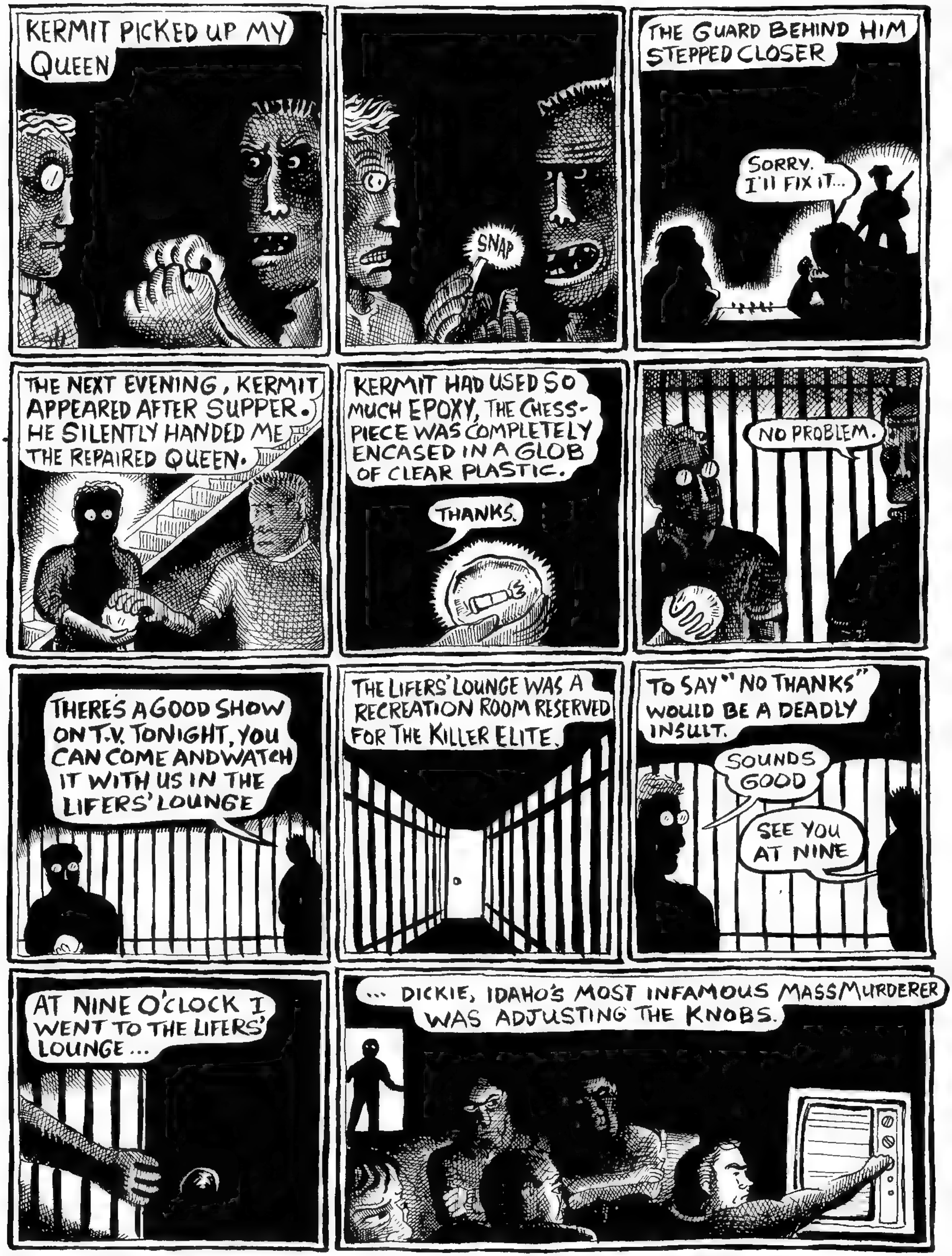

FOLLOWING AN OBSCENE AMOUNT OF BEER CONSUMPTION, MEADOWS BLADDER WAS FINALLY ABOUT TO BURST!
BLOP!?
GO TELL DE CAPPIN AH BE READY TO (URP) LET FLY..
PISS
HEY CAPTAIN·THET BIG NIG IS COMIN'·HE SEZ HES READY TO LET FLY·HE GONNA PISS IN YOUR MOUTH CAP? CAN I WATCH CAP? HUH? CAN I CAP? HUH? CAN I? CAN I?
SHUT THE FUCK UP! I'M WAITING... GET THAT TART OUT OF HERE..
LAP! LAP! YESSUH..
COO
MEADOWS ARRIVED AND CUT LOOSE WITH A HIGH-POWERED GEYSER OF URINE.. SPRAYING TO AND FRO WITH HIS MASSIVE TAR ROLL UNTIL HITTING CAPTAIN PISSGUMS SQUARE IN THE MOUTH!
YARF
MMMMMMMMMM AAAAAAHHHHHHHH
FROOOSH!
RUMBLE BLORP
BLASTING HIM RIGHT OUT OF HIS CABIN'S WINDOW FROM THE SHIP'S STERN!!
FOR EVERY ACTION THERE IS A REACTION.. MEADOW'S BLADDER WHICH BURST LIKE A DAM!! PROPELLED THE SHIP INTO THE NEXT PORT, CRASHING INTO A PIER, FLINGING MEADOWS INTO A HOSTILE BIGOT TAVERN.
A NIG!
CRASH!
A LOATHSOME BLACKAMOOR AND HIS PET BILGE RAT! WE MUST SLAY THE PAIR, POST HASTE!
I SMELL A NIGGER.. I AINT CUT ONE FOR TWO WHOLE DAYS AND NEED TO BAD!
LEAVING CAPTAIN PISSGUMS MAROONED ON A DESERT ISLE..
..AND NOT A DROP TO DRINK..
END!

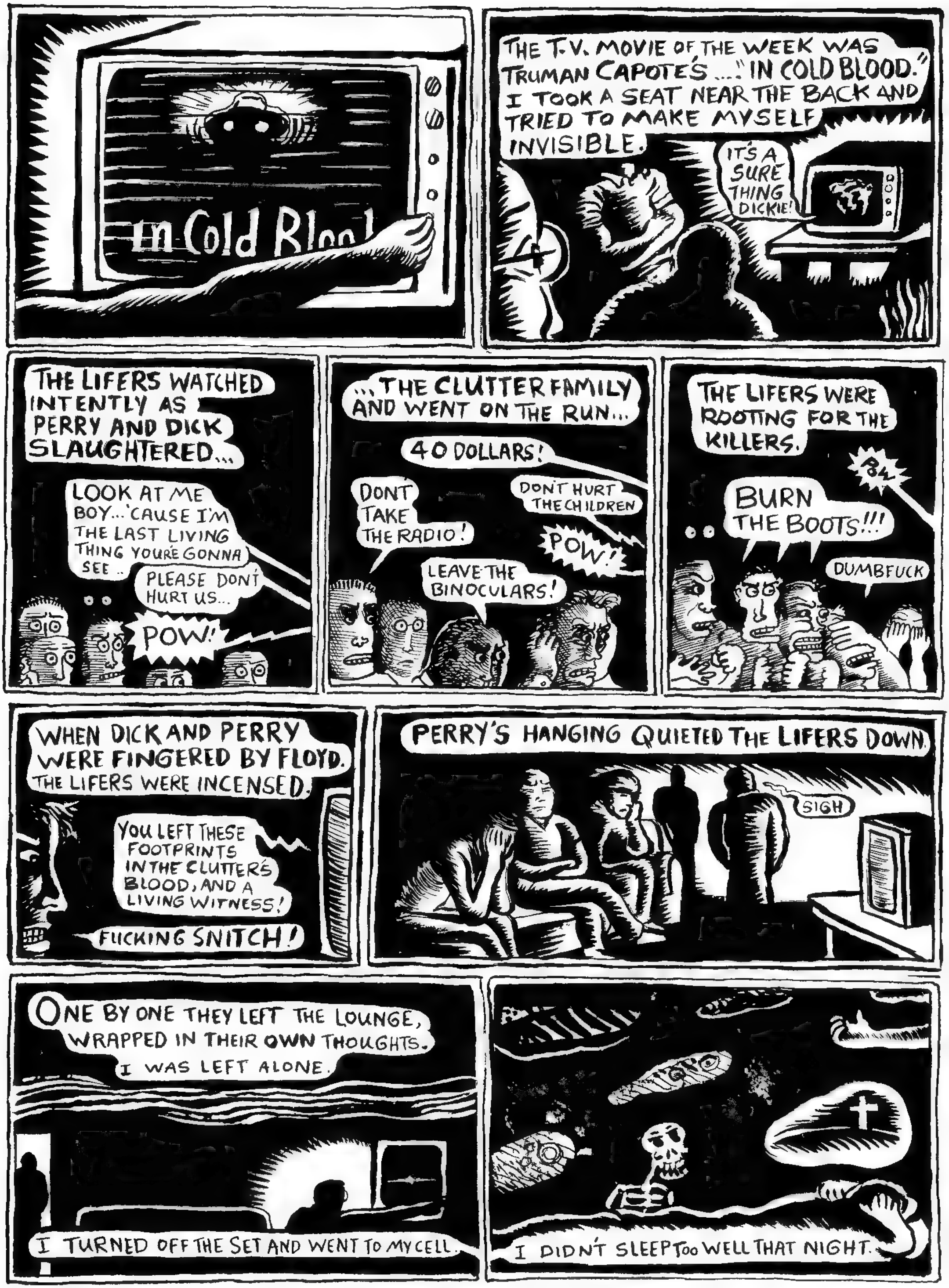
ORIGINAL ART WORK FOR SALE· WRITE: S CLAY WILSON· c/o DICKS BAR· 290 SANCHEZ· S·F CALIF. 94114

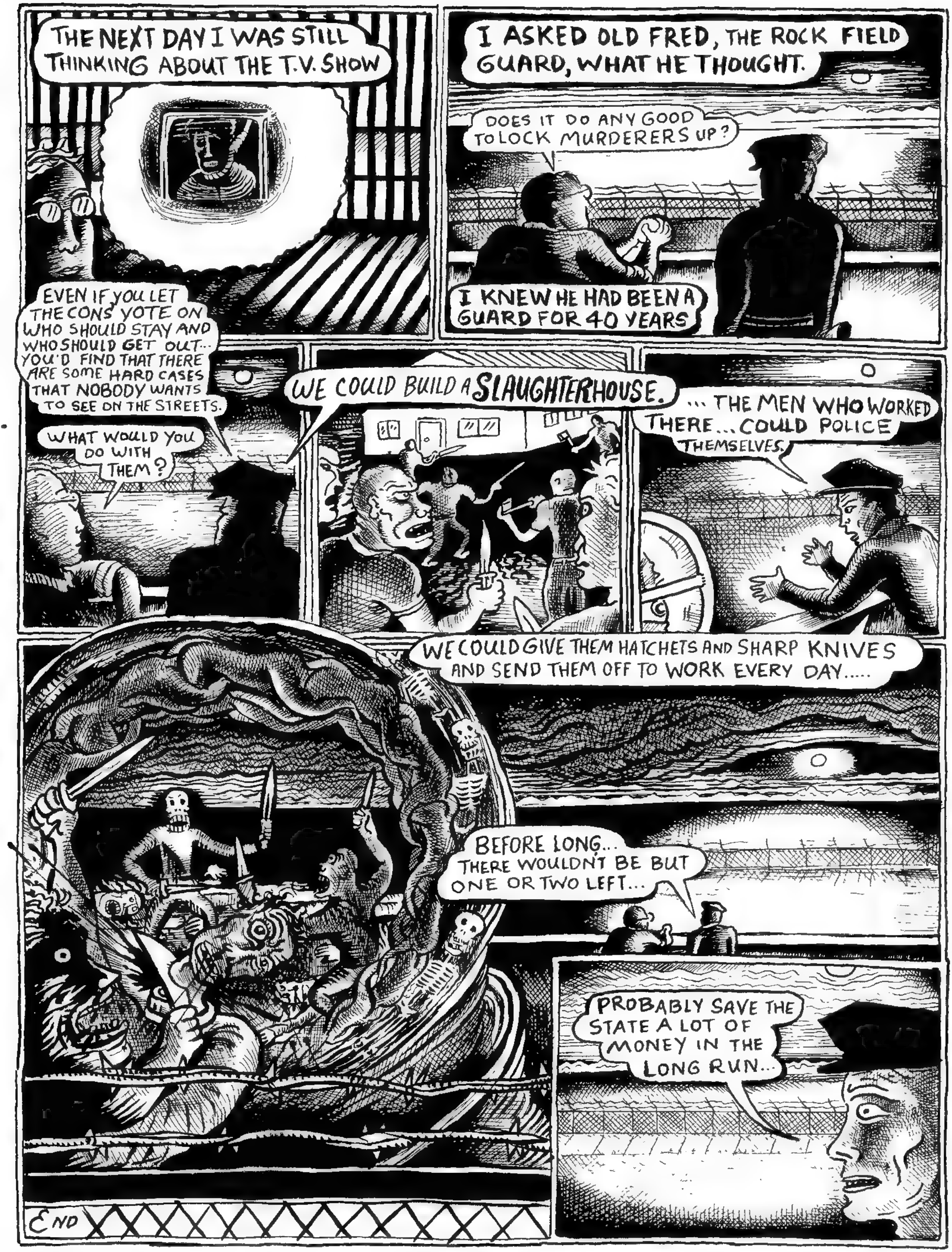

DENNIS THE SULLEN MENACE
BY DENNIS P. EICHHORN AND MICHAEL DOUGAN
A FEW YEARS AGO I GOT BUSTED FOR DEALING ACID AND MARIJUANA
THE JUDGE GAVE ME THREE YEARS IN THE IDAHO STATE PENITENTIARY.
IN IDAHO, FIRST TIME OFFENDERS CAN GET OUT IN FOUR MONTHS IF THEY DON'T FUCK UP. THE OTHER CONVICTS CALLED US "120 DAY RIDERS."
THE NEW ARRIVALS WERE KEPT SEPARATE FROM THE REST OF THE PRISON POPULATION IN A CELL CALLED "THE FISHTANK." WE WERE THE FISH.
WE ATE SEPARATELY FROM THE OTHER CONVICTS. AS I STOOD IN LINE WAITING FOR MY FIRST MEAL I NOTICED A MEXICAN IN A WHITE WAITER'S JACKET WALKING TOWARD ME...
AS HE CAME ALONGSIDE ME HE WHIRLED AND STABBED THE GUY IN FRONT OF ME IN THE BACK
THE GUY FELL TO THE FLOOR SCREAMING IN PAIN. IN A MATTER OF MINUTES, HE WAS DEAD.
AAAAAAAAAAAAUGH!!
THE GUARDS TOOK US ALL TO SEPARATE CELLS AND QUESTIONED US. I KNEW ENOUGH TO SAY I HADN'T SEEN ANYTHING.
LATER I HEARD THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE THAT THE DEAD GUY WAS A SNITCH WHO WAS BEGINNING HIS SECOND STRETCH.
SOME PEOPLE HAD BEEN WAITING FOR YEARS TO GET HIM. I ALSO LEARNED THAT IT ONLY COST TWO CARTONS OF CIGARETTES TO HAVE SOMEONE KILLED.
FOLDING MONEY WASN'T ALLOWED BEHIND THE WALLS AND CIGARETTES WERE THE MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE. SOME PEOPLE HAD HUNDREDS OF CARTONS STACKED UNDER THEIR BUNKS.

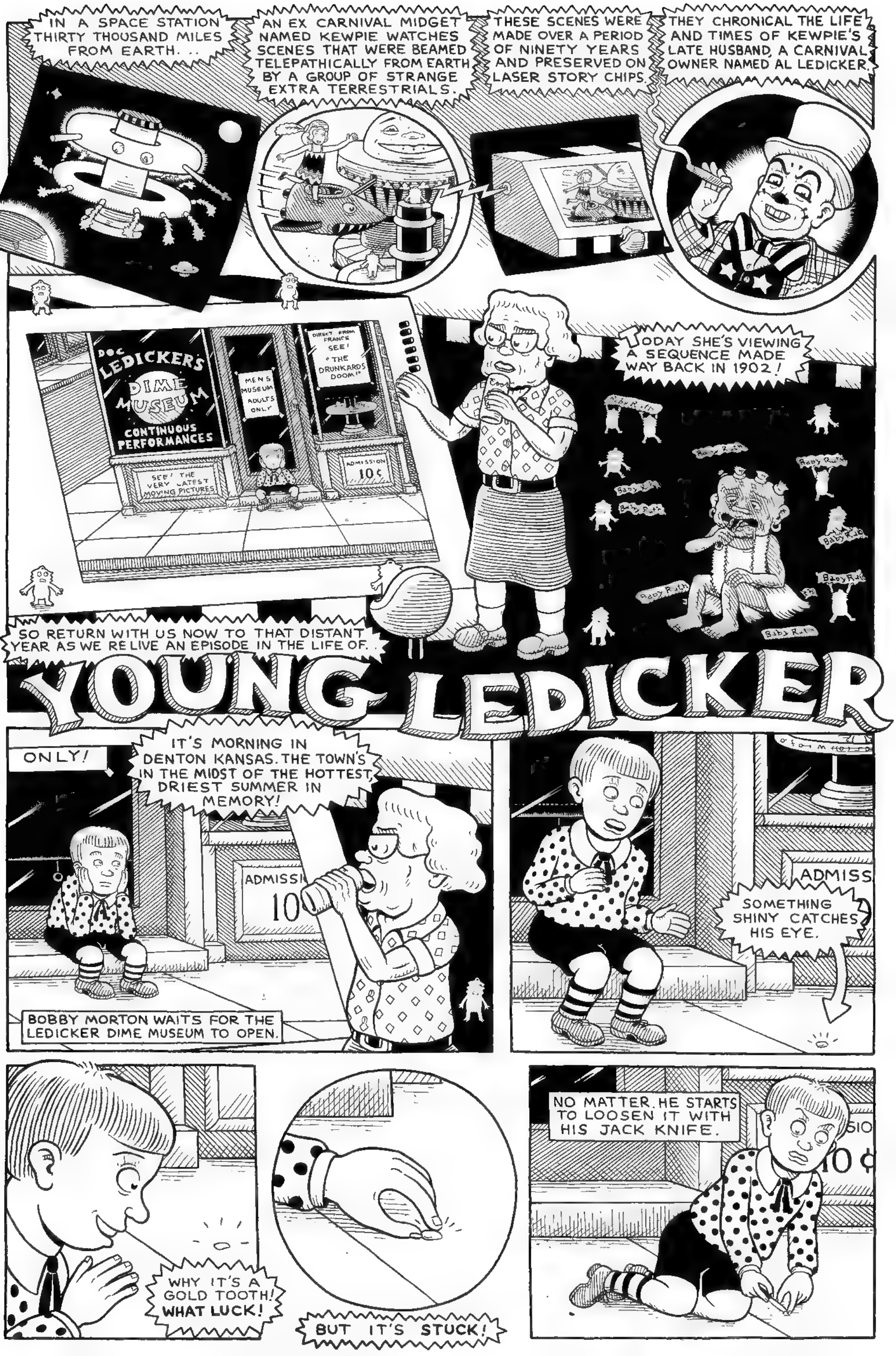

AFTER 3 WEEKS, I WAS MOVED TO A MEDIUM SECURITY WORKFARM IN THE NEARBY DESERT
THE PRISONERS WERE NEARLY ALL FIRST-TIMERS, LIKE MYSELF, OR LIFERS WHO HAD BEEN LOCKED UP FOR YEARS. MOST OF THE GUARDS WERE MORMONS
EVERYONE BUT ME WAS TATTOOED. MY CELLMATE, WHO WAS DOING 30 YEARS, HAD A DEVIL'S HEAD TATTOO ON HIS INNER LEFT ELBOW.
HE HAD A THREE-CARTON A DAY SMACK HABIT. EVERY NIGHT, I'D WATCH AS HE SHOT HIMSELF UP..
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS HIT UP IN THE DEVIL'S FACE?
UUUH!
OVER THE YEARS, HIS TATTOO HAD BECOME...BLUISH SCAR TISSUE...
IT FEELS RIGHT...
DURING THE DAYS, I WORKED OUTSIDE. MY JOB WAS TO WALK ACROSS NEWLY-HARROWED FIELDS TOSSING ROCKS INTO A SLOW-MOVING DUMPTRUCK
THE WORK WAS INCREDIBLY BORING. TO PASS THE TIME I MADE UP SONGS AND PLAYED IMAGINARY GAMES WITH ROCKS
ALICE
BETTY
CHRISTY
DENISE
SOMETIMES I PLAYED MENTAL MONOPOLY. I FOUND THAT I COULD REMEMBER EVERY DETAIL OF THE GAME.
MONOPOLY
7....LET'S SEE...
THAT PUTS ME ON......CHANCE.....
OKAY, PICK A CARD...
...GO TO JAIL!
HAHAHAHA!!! JAIL! HAHAHAHA... DO NOT PASS GO HAHAHA..
ONE DAY, ANOTHER CONVICT FLIPPED OUT AND TRIED TO KILL ME BY THROWING A LARGE ROCK AT ME.
IT NARROWLY MISSED MY HEAD.
WHOOPS HAHAHA..
I NEVER TURNED MY BACK TO HIM AFTER THAT
I KNEW WHERE HE WAS EVERY HOUR OF THE DAY. EVEN IN MY SLEEP I KNEW EXACTLY WHERE HE WAS....

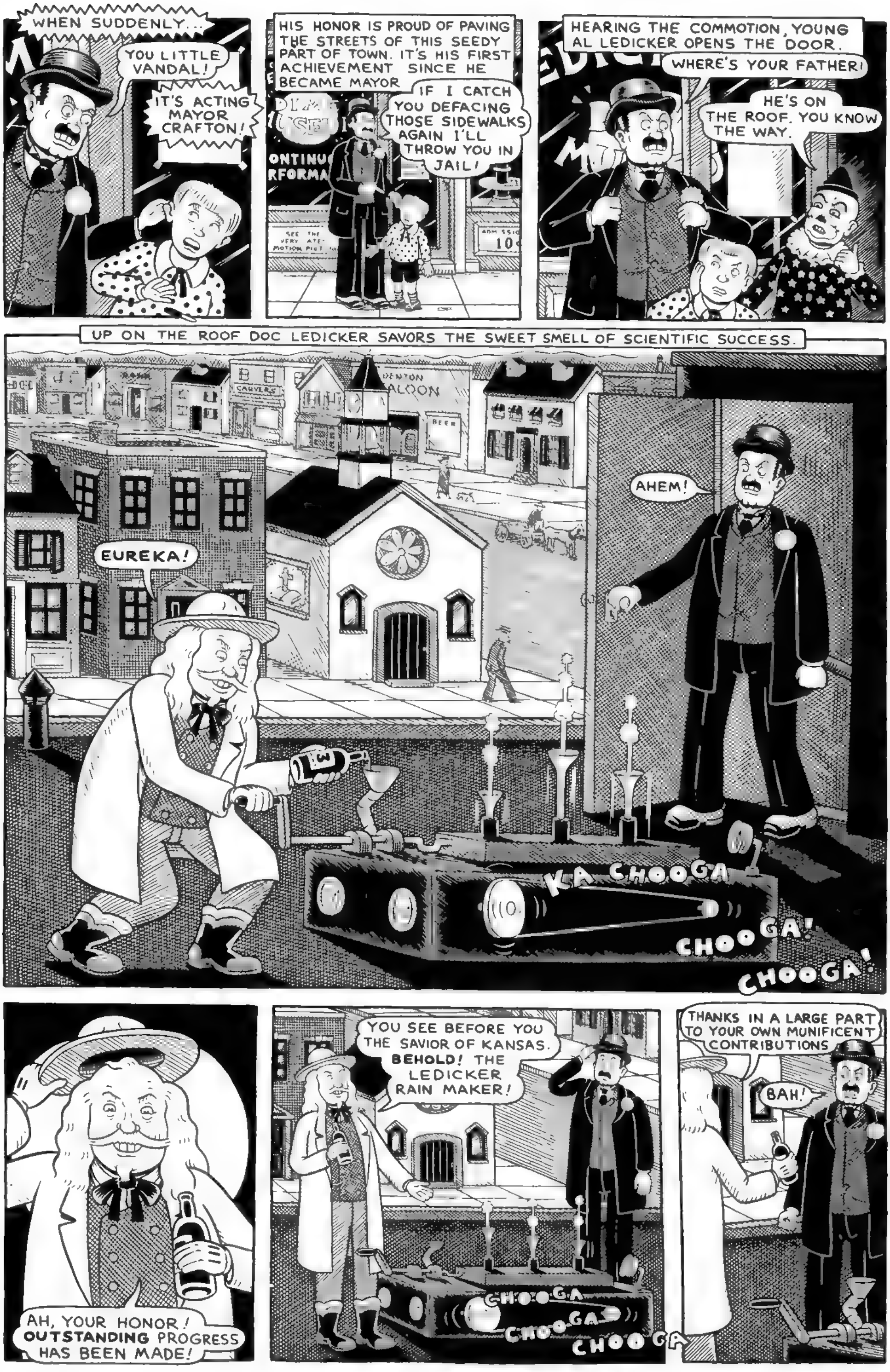

NIGHTS WERE THE WORST. SOMETIMES THERE WOULD BE A RAPE OR GANG BANG. I KNEW ENOUGH TO SAY I HADN'T HEARD ANYTHING...
TAKE IT PUNK!
HUH?
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA
IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO DEVELOP AN AIR OF SULLEN MENACE. I DIDN'T HAVE MUCH TO SAY TO ANYONE. THAT WAS NOTHING UNUSUAL. A LOT OF PEOPLE "DUMMIED UP."
NO! GET AWAY FROM ME! AAAAAAAAUGH!
SOMETIMES AFTER DINNER I'D SIT IN THE CAFETERIA AND PLAY CHESS WITH A MURDERER FROM POCATELLO.
YOUR MOVE
ONE EVENING, A BIG PSYCHOTIC NAMED KERMIT KIBITZED OUR GAME.
KERMIT WAS A BASQUE FROM IDAHO FALLS.
HE'D RAPED AND KILLED A WOMAN AND EATEN OF HER FLESH.
THE GUARDS KEPT KERMIT HEAVILY TRANQUILIZED AND WATCHED HIM CLOSELY.
I WON THE GAME I WAS PLAYING.
PLAY ME
...ALL RIGHT
I USED THE FOOL'S CHECKMATE AND BEAT KERMIT IN FOUR MOVES.

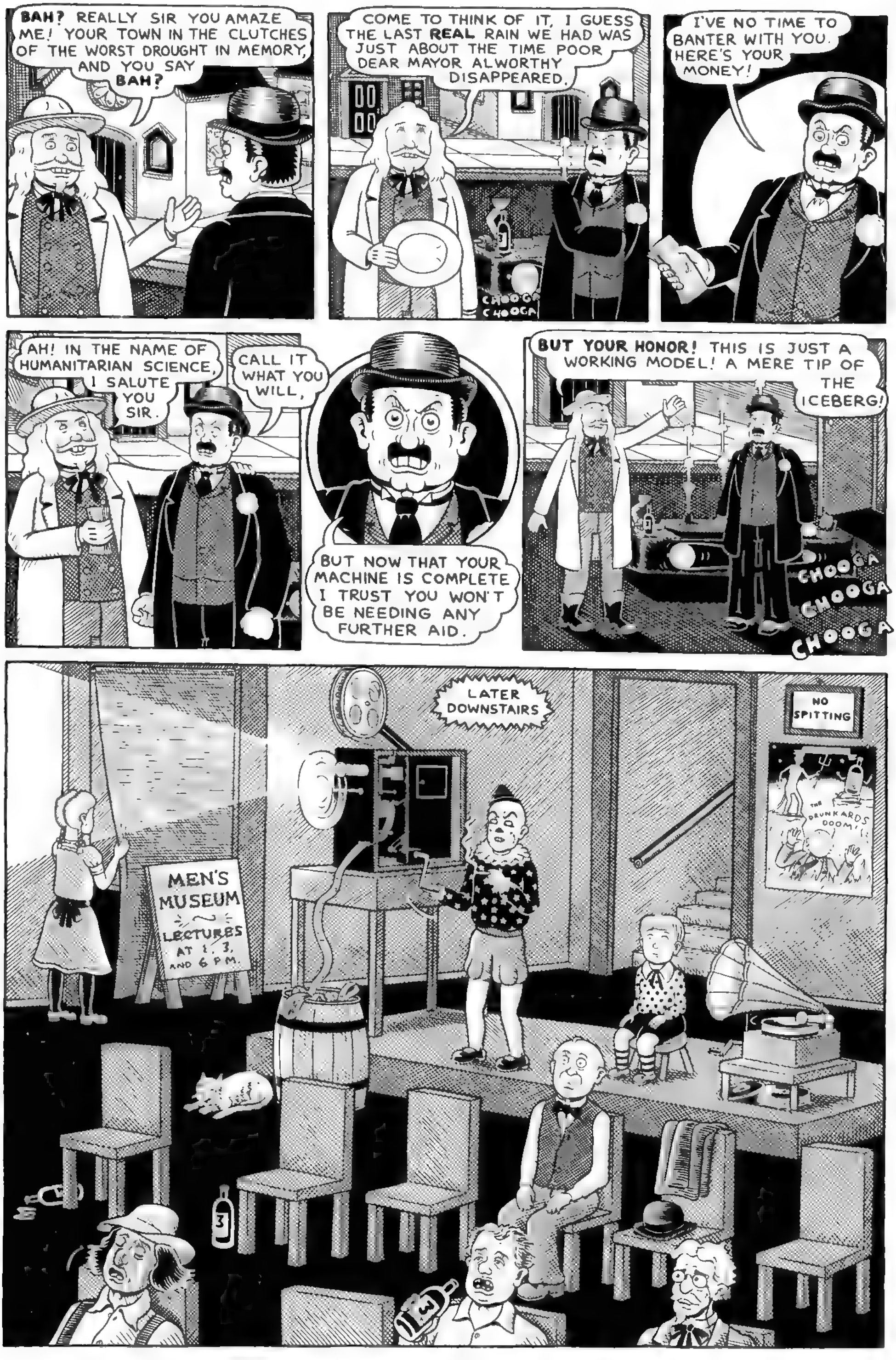

KERMIT PICKED UP MY QUEEN
SNAP
THE GUARD BEHIND HIM STEPPED CLOSER
SORRY. I'll FIX IT...
THE NEXT EVENING, KERMIT APPEARED AFTER SUPPER. HE SILENTLY HANDED ME THE REPAIRED QUEEN.
KERMIT HAD USED SO MUCH EPOXY, THE CHESS-PIECE WAS COMPLETELY ENCASED IN A GLOB OF CLEAR PLASTIC.
THANKS.
NO PROBLEM.
THERE'S A GOOD SHOW ON T.V. TONIGHT, YOU CAN COME AND WATCH IT WITH US IN THE LIFERS' LOUNGE
THE LIFERS' LOUNGE WAS A RECREATION ROOM RESERVED FOR THE KILLER ELITE.
TO SAY "NO THANKS" WOULD BE A DEADLY INSULT.
SOUNDS GOOD
SEE YOU AT NINE
AT NINE O'CLOCK I WENT TO THE LIFERS' LOUNGE...
... DICKIE, IDAHO'S MOST INFAMOUS MASS MURDERER WAS ADJUSTING THE KNOBS.

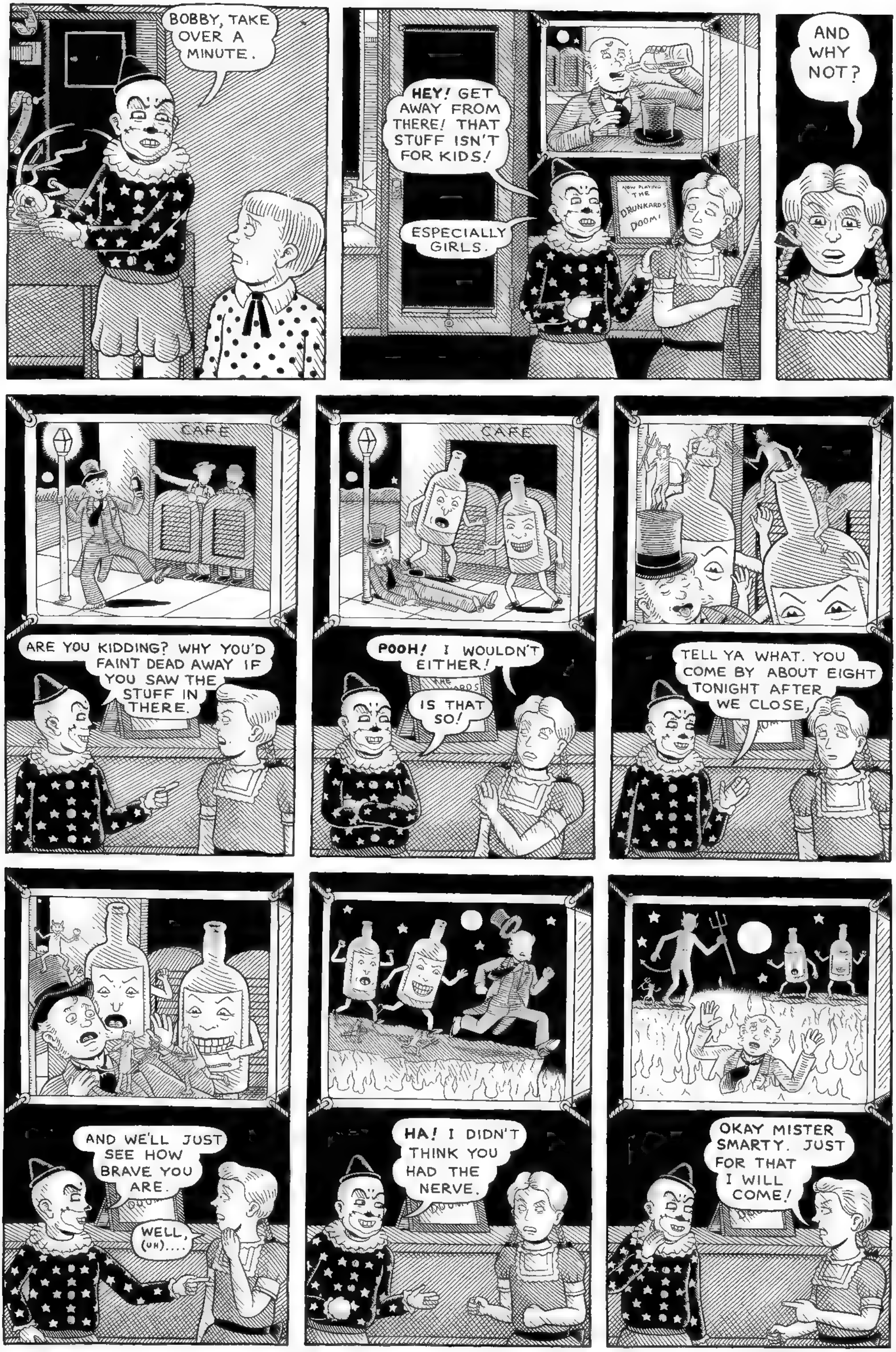

In Cold Blood
THE T.V. MOVIE OF THE WEEK WAS TRUMAN CAPOTE'S ..."IN COLD BLOOD." I TOOK A SEAT NEAR THE BACK AND TRIED TO MAKE MYSELF INVISIBLE.
IT'S A SURE THING DICKIE!
THE LIFERS WATCHED INTENTLY AS PERRY AND DICK SLAUGHTERED...
LOOK AT ME BOY... 'CAUSE I'M THE LAST LIVING THING YOU'RE GONNA SEE..
PLEASE DON'T HURT US...
POW!
...THE CLUTTER FAMILY AND WENT ON THE RUN...
40 DOLLARS!
DONT TAKE THE RADIO!
DON'T HURT THE CHILDREN
POW!
LEAVE THE BINOCULARS!
THE LIFERS WERE ROOTING FOR THE KILLERS.
POW
BURN THE BOOTS!!!
DUMBFUCK
WHEN DICK AND PERRY WERE FINGERED BY FLOYD, THE LIFERS WERE INCENSED.
YOU LEFT THESE FOOTPRINTS IN THE CLUTTER'S BLOOD, AND A LIVING WITNESS!
FUCKING SNITCH!
PERRY'S HANGING QUIETED THE LIFERS DOWN.
SIGH
ONE BY ONE THEY LEFT THE LOUNGE, WRAPPED IN THEIR OWN THOUGHTS.
I WAS LEFT ALONE.
I TURNED OFF THE SET AND WENT TO MY CELL.
I DIDN'T SLEEP TOO WELL THAT NIGHT.

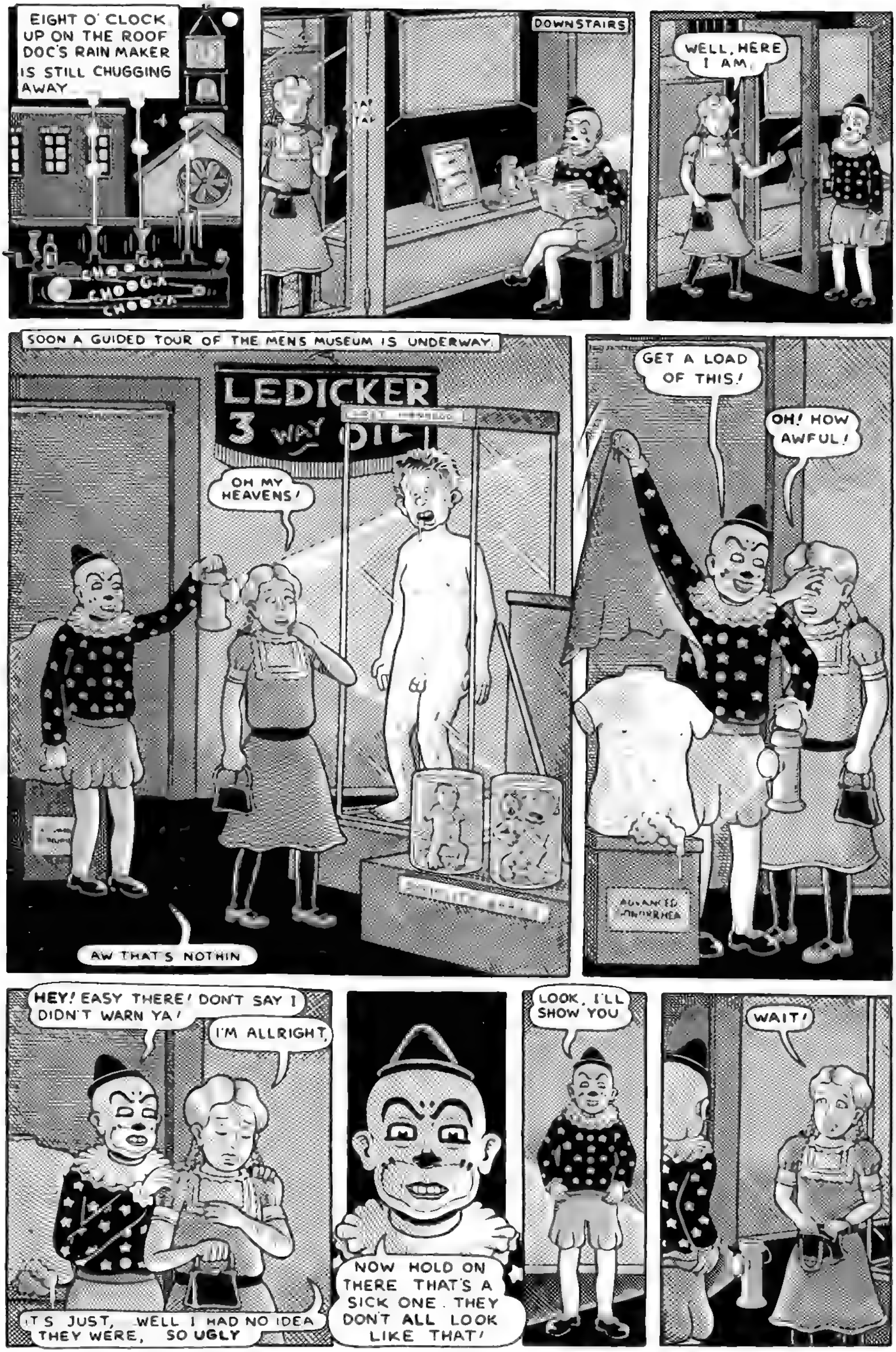

THE NEXT DAY I WAS STILL THINKING ABOUT THE T.V. SHOW
I ASKED OLD FRED, THE ROCK FIELD GUARD, WHAT HE THOUGHT.
DOES IT DO ANY GOOD TO LOCK MURDERERS UP?
I KNEW HE HAD BEEN A GUARD FOR 40 YEARS
EVEN IF YOU LET THE CONS VOTE ON WHO SHOULD STAY AND WHO SHOULD GET OUT... YOU'D FIND THAT THERE ARE SOME HARD CASES THAT NOBODY WANTS TO SEE ON THE STREETS.
WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH THEM?
WE COULD BUILD A SLAUGHTERHOUSE.
... THE MEN WHO WORKED THERE... COULD POLICE THEMSELVES.
WE COULD GIVE THEM HATCHETS AND SHARP KNIVES AND SEND THEM OFF TO WORK EVERY DAY.....
BEFORE LONG... THERE WOULDN'T BE BUT ONE OR TWO LEFT...
PROBABLY SAVE THE STATE A LOT OF MONEY IN THE LONG RUN...
END

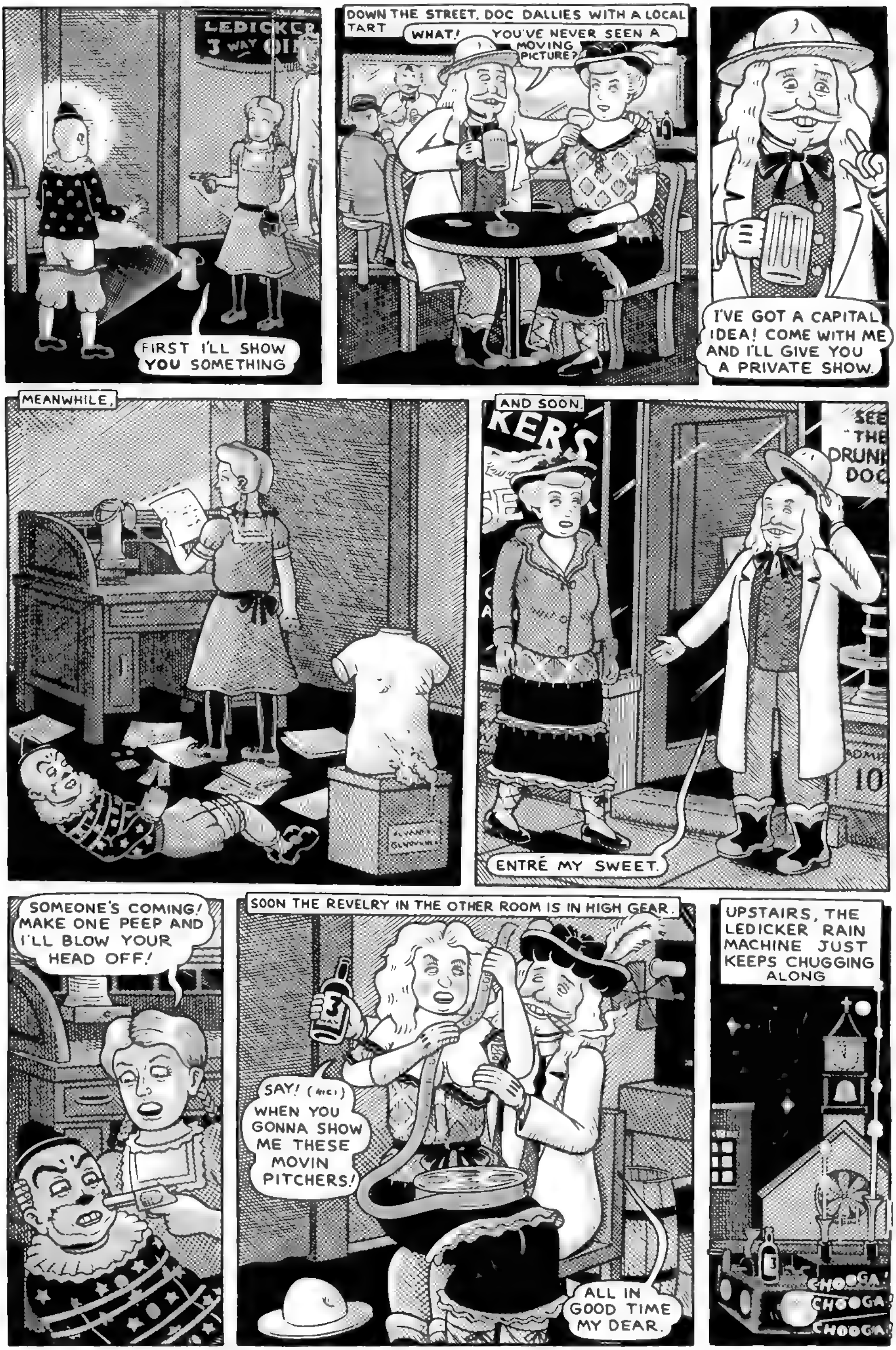

IN A SPACE STATION THIRTY THOUSAND MILES FROM EARTH. . .
AN EX CARNIVAL MIDGET NAMED KEWPIE WATCHES SCENES THAT WERE BEAMED TELEPATHICALLY FROM EARTH BY A GROUP OF STRANGE EXTRA TERRESTRIALS.
THESE SCENES WERE MADE OVER A PERIOD OF NINETY YEARS AND PRESERVED ON LASER STORY CHIPS.
THEY CHRONICAL THE LIFE AND TIMES OF KEWPIE'S LATE HUSBAND, A CARNIVAL OWNER NAMED AL LEDICKER.
DOC LEDICKER'S DIME MUSEUM
CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCES
SEE! THE VERY LATEST MOVING PICTURES
MEN'S MUSEUM ADULTS ONLY
DIRECT FROM FRANCE SEE! "THE DRUNKARDS DOOM!"
ADMISSION 10¢
Coke
TODAY SHE'S VIEWING A SEQUENCE MADE WAY BACK IN 1902!
Baby Ruth
SO RETURN WITH US NOW TO THAT DISTANT YEAR AS WE RELIVE AN EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF. .
YOUNG LEDICKER
ONLY!
IT'S MORNING IN DENTON KANSAS. THE TOWN'S IN THE MIDST OF THE HOTTEST, DRIEST SUMMER IN MEMORY!
ADMISSI 10
BOBBY MORTON WAITS FOR THE LEDICKER DIME MUSEUM TO OPEN.
ADMISS
SOMETHING SHINY CATCHES HIS EYE.
WHY IT'S A GOLD TOOTH! **WHAT LUCK!**
BUT IT'S STUCK!
NO MATTER. HE STARTS TO LOOSEN IT WITH HIS JACK KNIFE.
10¢

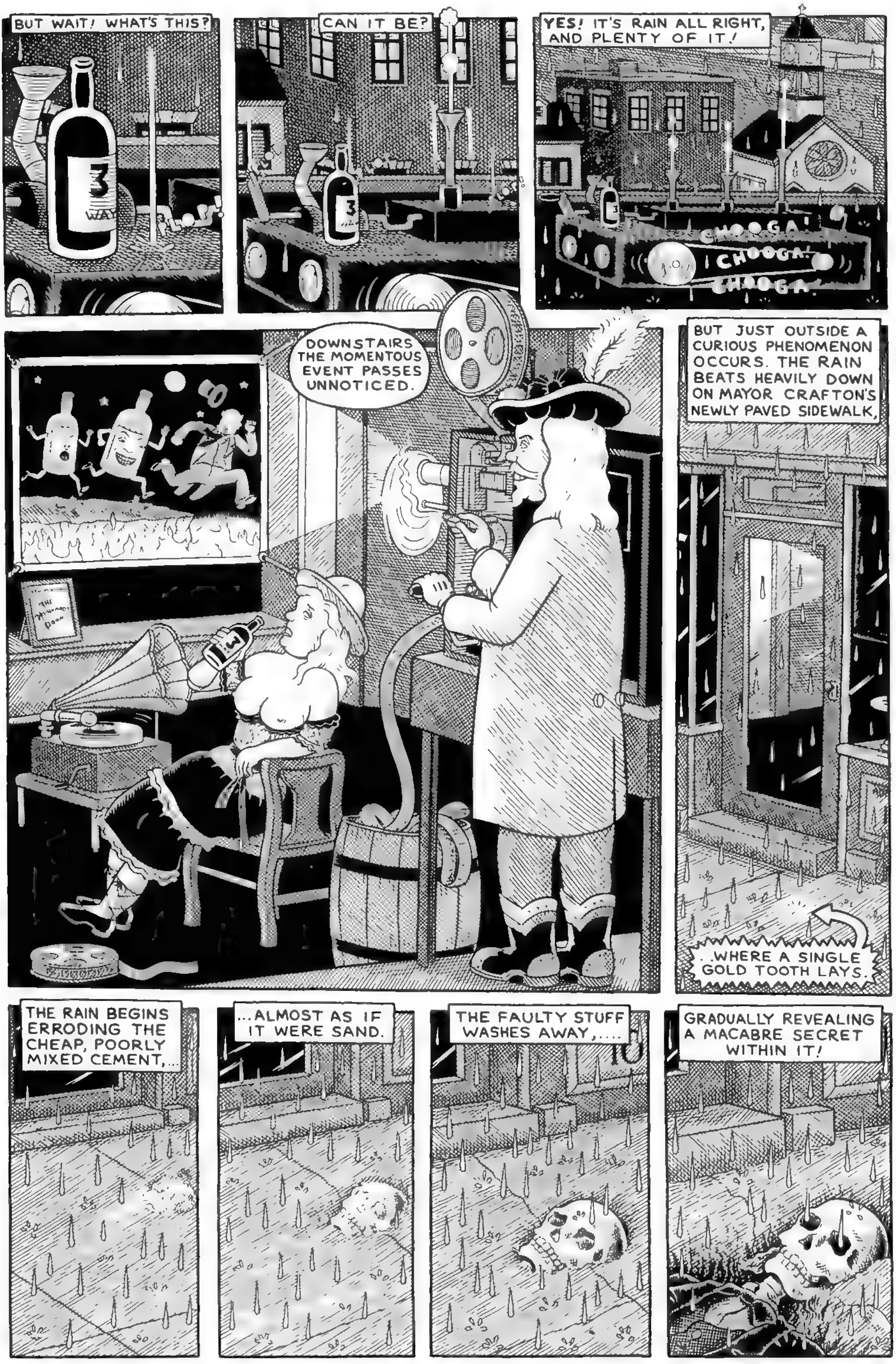

WHEN SUDDENLY...
YOU LITTLE VANDAL!
IT'S ACTING MAYOR CRAFTON!
HIS HONOR IS PROUD OF PAVING THE STREETS OF THIS SEEDY PART OF TOWN. IT'S HIS FIRST ACHIEVEMENT SINCE HE BECAME MAYOR
IF I CATCH YOU DEFACING THOSE SIDEWALKS AGAIN I'LL THROW YOU IN JAIL!
ONTINU
RFORMA
SEE THE VERY ATE MOTION PICT
ADM SSIO 10¢
HEARING THE COMMOTION, YOUNG AL LEDICKER OPENS THE DOOR.
WHERE'S YOUR FATHER!
HE'S ON THE ROOF. YOU KNOW THE WAY.
UP ON THE ROOF DOC LEDICKER SAVORS THE SWEET SMELL OF SCIENTIFIC SUCCESS.
BANK
CARVERS
DENTON ALOON
BEER
AHEM!
EUREKA!
KA CHOOGA
CHOOGA!
CHOOGA!
AH, YOUR HONOR! **OUTSTANDING** PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE!
YOU SEE BEFORE YOU THE SAVIOR OF KANSAS. **BEHOLD!** THE LEDICKER RAIN MAKER!
CHOOGA
CHOOGA
CHOOGA
THANKS IN A LARGE PART TO YOUR OWN MUNIFICENT CONTRIBUTIONS
BAH!

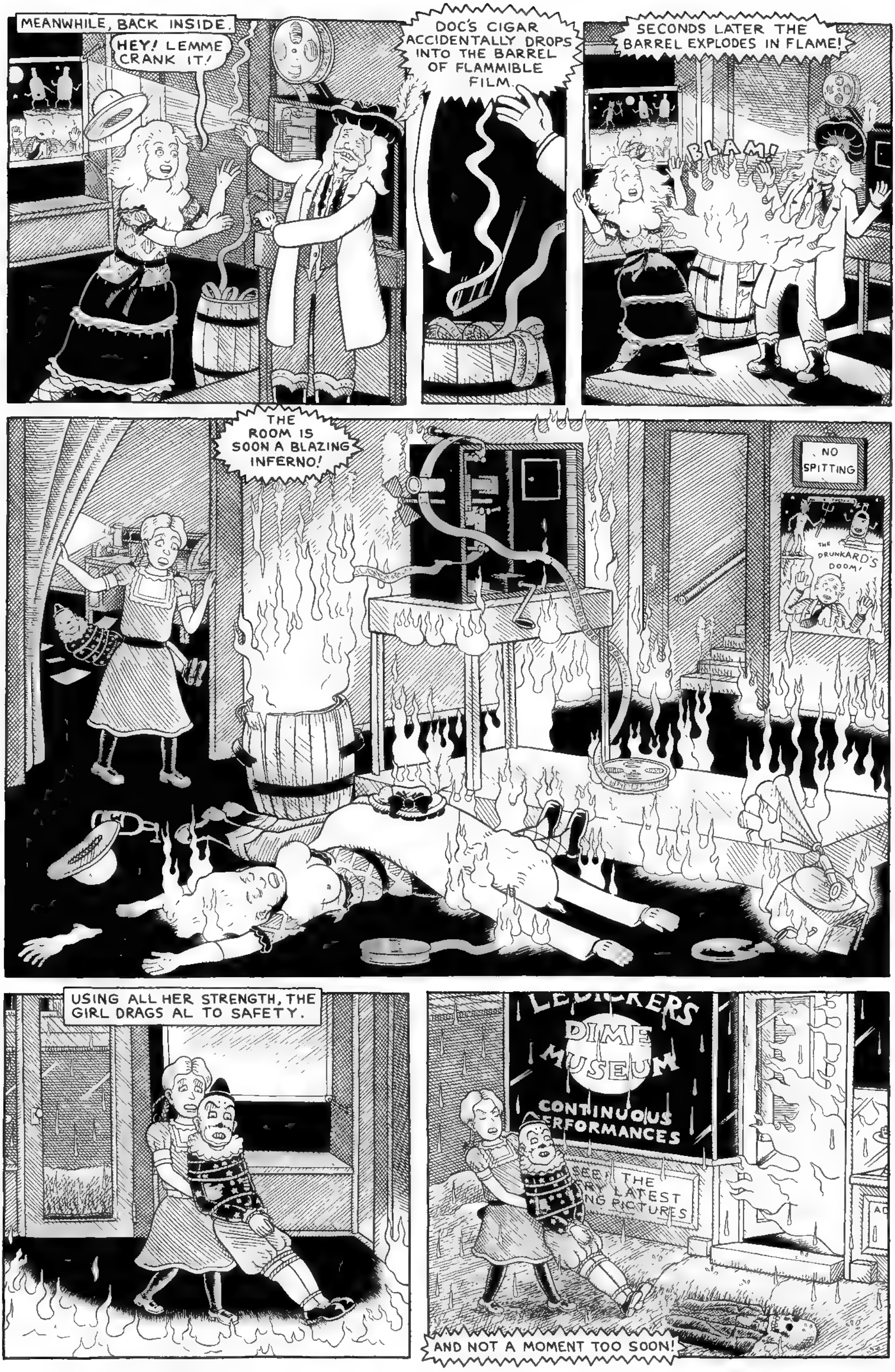

BAH? REALLY SIR YOU AMAZE ME! YOUR TOWN IN THE CLUTCHES OF THE WORST DROUGHT IN MEMORY, AND YOU SAY BAH?
COME TO THINK OF IT, I GUESS THE LAST REAL RAIN WE HAD WAS JUST ABOUT THE TIME POOR DEAR MAYOR ALWORTHY DISAPPEARED.
3
CHOOGA CHOOGA
I'VE NO TIME TO BANTER WITH YOU. HERE'S YOUR MONEY!
AH! IN THE NAME OF HUMANITARIAN SCIENCE, I SALUTE YOU SIR.
CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL,
BUT NOW THAT YOUR MACHINE IS COMPLETE I TRUST YOU WON'T BE NEEDING ANY FURTHER AID.
BUT YOUR HONOR! THIS IS JUST A WORKING MODEL! A MERE TIP OF THE ICEBERG!
CHOOGA CHOOGA CHOOGA
LATER DOWNSTAIRS
NO SPITTING
THE DRUNKARDS DOOM!
MEN'S MUSEUM
LECTURES AT 1, 3, AND 6 P.M.
3
3

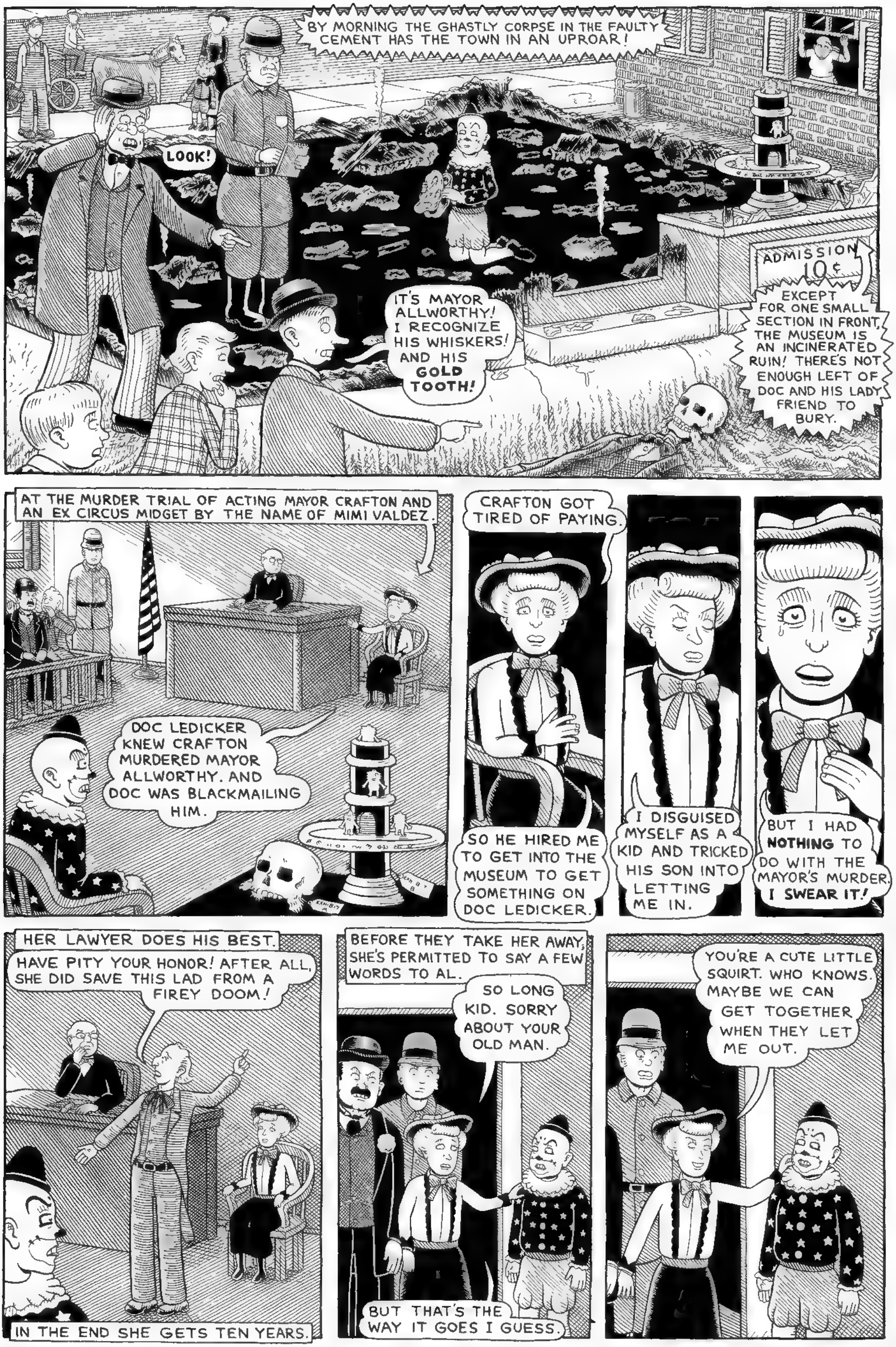

BOBBY, TAKE OVER A MINUTE.
HEY! GET AWAY FROM THERE! THAT STUFF ISN'T FOR KIDS!
ESPECIALLY GIRLS.
NOW PLAYING THE DRUNKARD'S DOOM!
AND WHY NOT?
CAFE
ARE YOU KIDDING? WHY YOU'D FAINT DEAD AWAY IF YOU SAW THE STUFF IN THERE.
CAFE
POOH! I WOULDN'T EITHER!
IS THAT SO!
TELL YA WHAT. YOU COME BY ABOUT EIGHT TONIGHT AFTER WE CLOSE,
AND WE'LL JUST SEE HOW BRAVE YOU ARE.
WELL, (UH)....
HA! I DIDN'T THINK YOU HAD THE NERVE.
OKAY MISTER SMARTY. JUST FOR THAT I WILL COME!

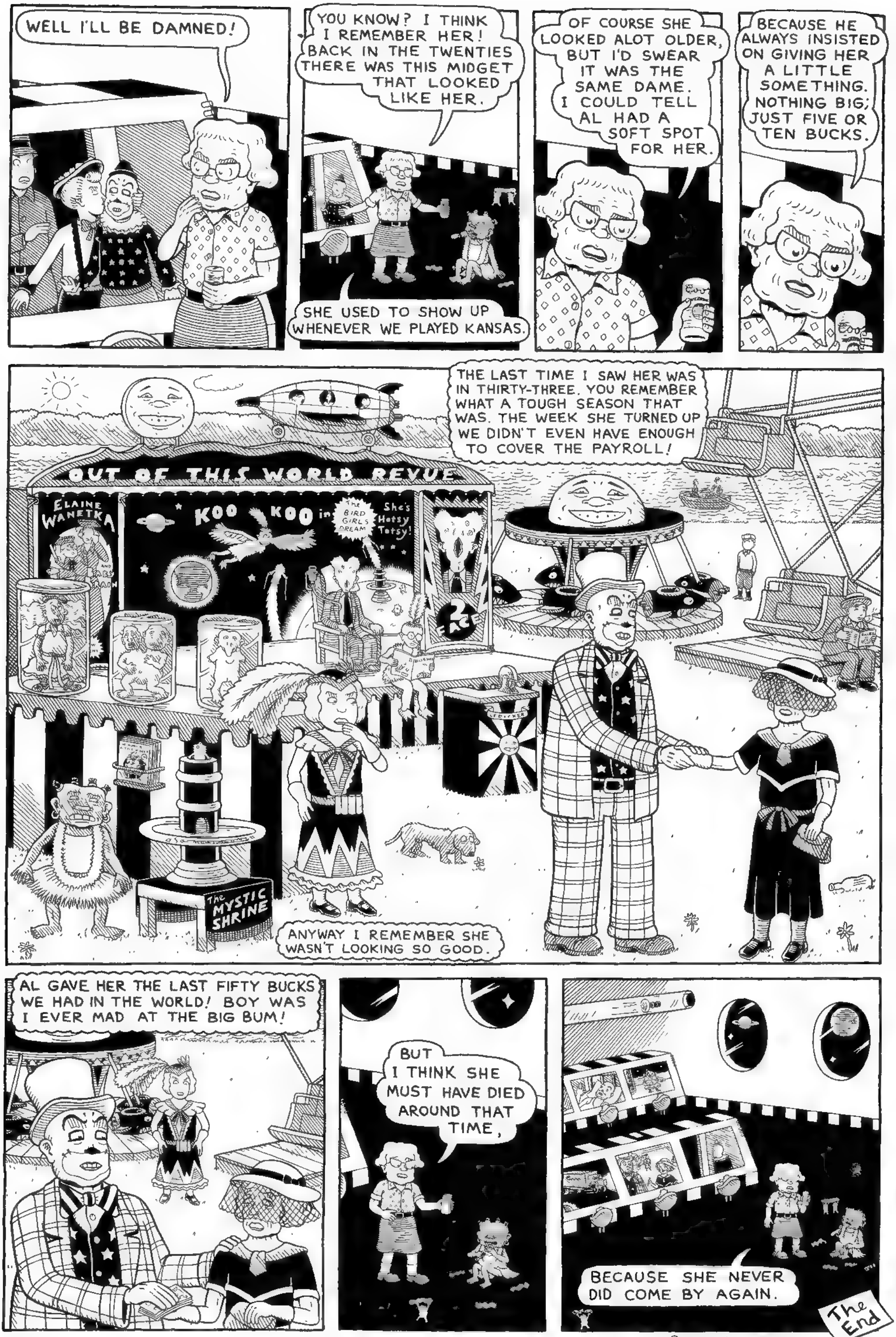

EIGHT O' CLOCK UP ON THE ROOF DOC'S RAIN MAKER IS STILL CHUGGING AWAY
CHOOGA CHOOGA CHOOGA
DOWNSTAIRS
TAP TAP
WELL, HERE I AM.
SOON A GUIDED TOUR OF THE MENS MUSEUM IS UNDERWAY.
LEDICKER 3 WAY OIL
OH MY HEAVENS!
AW THAT'S NOTHIN
GET A LOAD OF THIS!
OH! HOW AWFUL!
ADVANCED GONORRHEA
HEY! EASY THERE! DON'T SAY I DIDN'T WARN YA!
I'M ALLRIGHT.
IT'S JUST, WELL I HAD NO IDEA THEY WERE, SO UGLY
NOW HOLD ON THERE THAT'S A SICK ONE. THEY DON'T ALL LOOK LIKE THAT!
LOOK, I'LL SHOW YOU
WAIT!


LEDICKER 3 WAY OI
FIRST I'LL SHOW YOU SOMETHING
DOWN THE STREET, DOC DALLIES WITH A LOCAL TART
WHAT! YOU'VE NEVER SEEN A MOVING PICTURE?
I'VE GOT A CAPITAL IDEA! COME WITH ME AND I'LL GIVE YOU A PRIVATE SHOW.
MEANWHILE,
AND SOON,
KER'S
SEE THE DRUNK DOC
10
ENTRÉ MY SWEET.
SOMEONE'S COMING! MAKE ONE PEEP AND I'LL BLOW YOUR HEAD OFF!
SOON THE REVELRY IN THE OTHER ROOM IS IN HIGH GEAR.
SAY! (HIC) WHEN YOU GONNA SHOW ME THESE MOVIN PITCHERS!
ALL IN GOOD TIME MY DEAR.
3
UPSTAIRS, THE LEDICKER RAIN MACHINE JUST KEEPS CHUGGING ALONG
CHOOGA! CHOOGA! CHOOGA!


BUT WAIT! WHAT'S THIS?
3
WAY
CAN IT BE?
3
YES! IT'S RAIN ALL RIGHT, AND PLENTY OF IT!
CHOOGA! CHOOGA! CHOOGA!
DOWNSTAIRS THE MOMENTOUS EVENT PASSES UNNOTICED.
3
BUT JUST OUTSIDE A CURIOUS PHENOMENON OCCURS. THE RAIN BEATS HEAVILY DOWN ON MAYOR CRAFTON'S NEWLY PAVED SIDEWALK,
..WHERE A SINGLE GOLD TOOTH LAYS.
THE RAIN BEGINS ERRODING THE CHEAP, POORLY MIXED CEMENT,...
...ALMOST AS IF IT WERE SAND.
THE FAULTY STUFF WASHES AWAY,....
GRADUALLY REVEALING A MACABRE SECRET WITHIN IT!


MEANWHILE, BACK INSIDE.
HEY! LEMME CRANK IT!
DOC'S CIGAR ACCIDENTALLY DROPS INTO THE BARREL OF FLAMMIBLE FILM.
SECONDS LATER THE BARREL EXPLODES IN FLAME!
BLAM!
THE ROOM IS SOON A BLAZING INFERNO!
NO SPITTING
THE DRUNKARD'S DOOM!
USING ALL HER STRENGTH, THE GIRL DRAGS AL TO SAFETY.
LEDICKER'S
DIME MUSEUM
CONTINUOUS ERFORMANCES
SEE THE RY LATEST NG PICTURES
AD
AND NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON!


BY MORNING THE GHASTLY CORPSE IN THE FAULTY CEMENT HAS THE TOWN IN AN UPROAR!
LOOK!
IT'S MAYOR ALLWORTHY! I RECOGNIZE HIS WHISKERS! AND HIS **GOLD TOOTH!**
ADMISSION 10¢
EXCEPT FOR ONE SMALL SECTION IN FRONT, THE MUSEUM IS AN INCINERATED RUIN! THERE'S NOT ENOUGH LEFT OF DOC AND HIS LADY FRIEND TO BURY.
AT THE MURDER TRIAL OF ACTING MAYOR CRAFTON AND AN EX CIRCUS MIDGET BY THE NAME OF MIMI VALDEZ.
DOC LEDICKER KNEW CRAFTON MURDERED MAYOR ALLWORTHY. AND DOC WAS BLACKMAILING HIM.
EXHIBIT A
EXHIBIT B
CRAFTON GOT TIRED OF PAYING.
SO HE HIRED ME TO GET INTO THE MUSEUM TO GET SOMETHING ON DOC LEDICKER.
I DISGUISED MYSELF AS A KID AND TRICKED HIS SON INTO LETTING ME IN.
BUT I HAD **NOTHING** TO DO WITH THE MAYOR'S MURDER. **I SWEAR IT!**
HER LAWYER DOES HIS BEST.
HAVE PITY YOUR HONOR! AFTER ALL, SHE DID SAVE THIS LAD FROM A FIREY DOOM!
IN THE END SHE GETS TEN YEARS.
BEFORE THEY TAKE HER AWAY, SHE'S PERMITTED TO SAY A FEW WORDS TO AL.
SO LONG KID. SORRY ABOUT YOUR OLD MAN.
BUT THAT'S THE WAY IT GOES I GUESS.
YOU'RE A CUTE LITTLE SQUIRT. WHO KNOWS. MAYBE WE CAN GET TOGETHER WHEN THEY LET ME OUT.


WELL I'LL BE DAMNED!
YOU KNOW? I THINK I REMEMBER HER! BACK IN THE TWENTIES THERE WAS THIS MIDGET THAT LOOKED LIKE HER.
SHE USED TO SHOW UP WHENEVER WE PLAYED KANSAS.
OF COURSE SHE LOOKED ALOT OLDER, BUT I'D SWEAR IT WAS THE SAME DAME. I COULD TELL AL HAD A SOFT SPOT FOR HER.
BECAUSE HE ALWAYS INSISTED ON GIVING HER A LITTLE SOMETHING. NOTHING BIG; JUST FIVE OR TEN BUCKS.
THE LAST TIME I SAW HER WAS IN THIRTY-THREE. YOU REMEMBER WHAT A TOUGH SEASON THAT WAS. THE WEEK SHE TURNED UP WE DIDN'T EVEN HAVE ENOUGH TO COVER THE PAYROLL!
OUT OF THIS WORLD REVUE
ELAINE WANETKA
KOO KOO in
The BIRD GIRLS DREAM
She's Hotsy Totsy!
The MYSTIC SHRINE
ANYWAY I REMEMBER SHE WASN'T LOOKING SO GOOD.
AL GAVE HER THE LAST FIFTY BUCKS WE HAD IN THE WORLD! BOY WAS I EVER MAD AT THE BIG BUM!
BUT I THINK SHE MUST HAVE DIED AROUND THAT TIME,
BECAUSE SHE NEVER DID COME BY AGAIN.
The End

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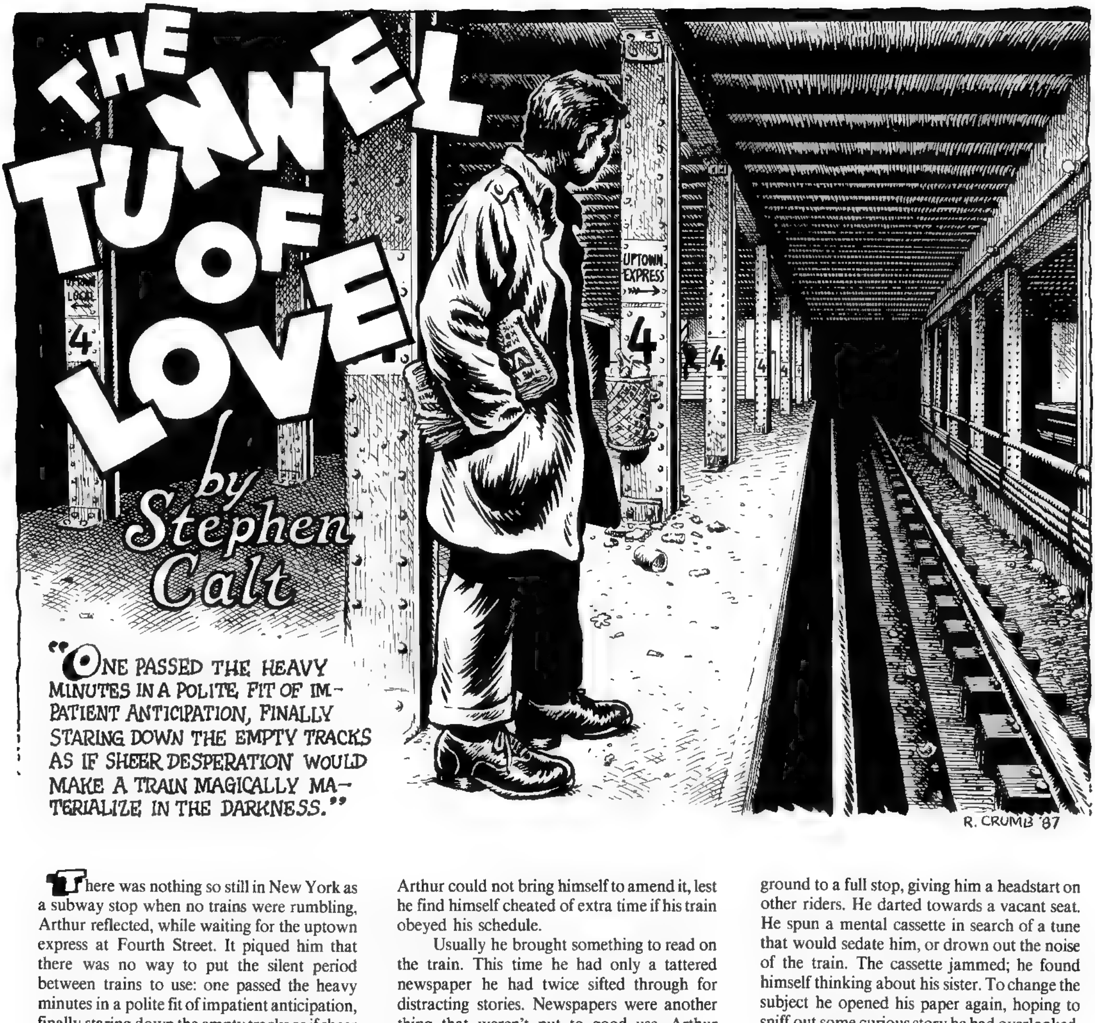
THE TUNNEL OF LOVE

by Stephen Calt



"ONE PASSED THE HEAVY MINUTES IN A POLITE FIT OF IMPATIENT ANTICIPATION, FINALLY STARING DOWN THE EMPTY TRACKS AS IF SHEER DESPERATION WOULD MAKE A TRAIN MAGICALLY MATERIALIZE IN THE DARKNESS."

R. CRUMB '87

There was nothing so still in New York as a subway stop when no trains were rumbling, Arthur reflected, while waiting for the uptown express at Fourth Street. It piqued him that there was no way to put the silent period between trains to use: one passed the heavy minutes in a polite fit of impatient anticipation, finally staring down the empty tracks as if sheer desperation would make a train magically materialize in the darkness. In the more efficient world he was forever imagining, a computerized board would predict each train arrival, freeing him to think of other things as he waited.

The subway anarchy made it impossible for Arthur to hoard time, let alone control it. Whenever he arranged to see someone he tried to leave his apartment at the last possible moment, ideally arriving ten or fifteen minutes late at his destination. His secretly delayed schedule was designed to nestle him in a comfortable buffer zone between politeness and rudeness, and to protect him from feeling tyrannized by punctuality. In reckoning his time of arrival it was his habit to allot himself a ten minute train wait. The deterioration of train service had blasted this calculation, but Arthur could not bring himself to amend it, lest he find himself cheated of extra time if his train obeyed his schedule.

Usually he brought something to read on the train. This time he had only a tattered newspaper he had twice sifted through for distracting stories. Newspapers were another thing that weren't put to good use, Arthur thought: to absorb half their slop required more fortitude than even a subway rider possessed. A four page paper without frills or features, selling for a nickel or dime, would set things aright.

Nothing short of a revolution could have made the subway itself more to Arthur's tastes. The graffiti mongers were no longer defacing trains; having exhausted virgin wall space, they had taken to defacing their predecessors' scrawls. Whoever did such scribbling—it all looked like the work of one prolific vandal—seemed to have made an intensive study of kindergarten art styles. Now it was part of the decor, and one simply obliterated it with inattentiveness.

On hearing the faint burr of his train Arthur stood up and readied to sprint. Luckily, he found himself next to a door when the train ground to a full stop, giving him a headstart on other riders. He darted towards a vacant seat. He spun a mental cassette in search of a tune that would sedate him, or drown out the noise of the train. The cassette jammed; he found himself thinking about his sister. To change the subject he opened his paper again, hoping to sniff out some curious story he had overlooked.

He had caught the last dying charge of the rush hour brigade. Hands gripped every available aluminum stirrup. He looked at their owners and saw a small platoon of corporate men, their faces, smooth as their palms, swathed in expressions of intense blandness. It was fun to look at the faces he saw on the train. To Arthur every face was an incomprehensible mask, revealing mood but cloaking character. He had always believed that there was more variety to people than to the features they displayed. Many people had faces that seemed stamped from some matrix, resembling hundreds of other faces. It was uncanny. He thought it was too bad no one kept an archive of portraits, assembling the faces of everyone in existence. That would be interesting to look at.

For Arthur the subway was a refuge from the enforced incuriosity of his ordinary existence. There his eyes could wander about the faces surrounding him with impunity. He nonetheless always pretended to be lost in thought as he scrutinized passengers. The way people pretended to ignore each other on the subway intrigued him. Some riders greeted the arrival of new passengers as an intrusion. It was as if they were sitting in a public lavatory without doors and were trying to preserve their privacy. Black teenagers, on the other hand, liked to stare insolently at the white passengers, who shrank into themselves at the approach of their eyes. Arthur was fascinated by the immobile way blacks tended to cup their hands as they walked: it was something he had tried to draw.

The passengers who tried to blinker out the belligerent-looking blacks they saw were making a mistake, Arthur believed. It never paid to hide your eyes from someone who might be dangerous. Once he had sat opposite a man with a large instrument case laid next to his feet. A well-groomed black sat calmly a few feet away, apparently minding his own business, whatever that was. When the train stopped at Penn Station the black passenger rose nonchalantly: without breaking his stride he snatched up the instrument case and dashed out of the train. Afterwards, Arthur marveled that the man had barely glanced at the case before seizing it.

On the other hand, a man could easily get killed in New York for looking at someone the wrong way. Those things happened, and when they did Arthur wondered exactly how the victim had been looking at his future killer. One never knew. Maybe the victim never knew, either. A strange dream he once had about subway violence came to him. Two middle-aged men in slate-grey raincoats boarded his train and sat beside him. He began a fascinating conversation with one of them. He couldn't recall a word that passed between them; perhaps no words had actually passed between them. Whatever was said, he felt quite acutely that he was somehow unburdening himself to a lifelong friend as he spoke to this perfect stranger. Just as he was savoring the experience the man took a casual peek at his watch. Without changing his nondescript expression he stood up, opened his raincoat and began firing the submachine gun he had tucked inside it. People screamed and scattered like a cluster of cockroaches. The unlucky ones crashed to the floor in bloody convulsions. Arthur looked on with silent stupefaction, wondering if the gun would be turned on himself. He had no idea what could have aroused the dream, which he regarded as more interesting than anything it conceivably signified. It was that way with his sketches: who knew what they really meant, or why he did them? If what he drew was less interesting than the remote forces that guided his hand, his work was worthless.

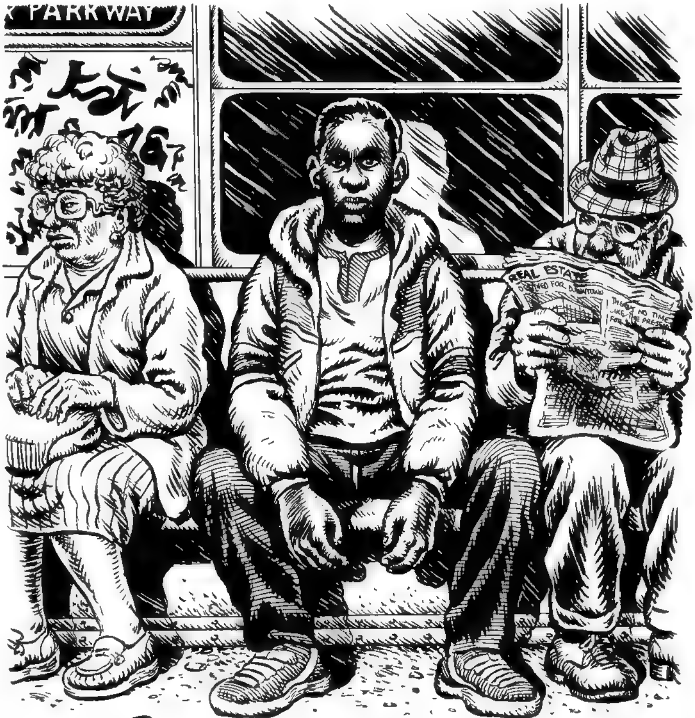
There was one subway passenger he had tried to paint, unsuccessfully. He had seen the man as a child. It was the first time he had seen a freak. The passenger was a legless beggar who was attached to a scuffed wooden cart, like a statue upon a pedestal. He had a plump face that looked as soft as a piece of fruit. Arthur was horrified by his body, and even by the serenity of his bearing as he wheeled himself through the subway car.

The sight of mutilated people still flustered him. It wasn't right ordinary people pretended they did not exist, or recoiled from them.

When the train stopped at 14th Street Arthur appraised the incoming passengers. It was odd how people he did not know could please or disgust him on sight. The most detestable people who rode the subways were the well-heeled harpies with sagging faces and bloated girdles who tried to purchase glamour in the form of make-up and expensive jewelry. At mid-day the trains were full of these women, whose vanity was uglier than their decay. He hated the loud rouge and the facial cream they all seemed to smear over themselves, which was the sickly color of a surgical bandage. He had once seen two of their tribe so immersed in some honking conversation about diets and diseases that neither noticed a deadly-looking teenager who stood next to them, his eyes clasping their gold necklaces. When they left the train he marched in step behind them. Arthur had been tempted to get off the train as well, simply to watch the mugging he was sure would follow.

Checking his watch, Arthur saw that he might still make the 7:10 bus. He would be late for dinner with his sister, but would have no time to call her from the bus station. He did not look forward to the occasion. He guessed that she would force-feed him unappetizing personal tidbits she regarded as revelations, concerning their family, or her divorce. He would listen impatiently and look on politely, offering inoffensive comments that meant nothing to him. She was sure to bring up the rage she felt towards their parents and her ex-husband, the rage she had never expressed thanks to her Wasp upbringing. She was now seeing a Jewish man and it was such a relief that they could bicker and scream at each other . . . That was the way she talked. He might as well be a microphone.

She had once been a shy girl. Now she had learned to express her feelings, she said, and to become more of a "real person". What had happened to her, Arthur thought, was simply that she had lost the feeling of shame that had once prevented her from being



"BLACK TEENAGERS, ON THE OTHER HAND, LIKED TO STARE INSOLENTLY AT THE WHITE PASSENGERS, WHO SHRANK INTO THEMSELVES AT THE APPROACH OF THEIR EYES."

overbearing and exposing her selfishness. Thanks to therapy, all she did was talk about herself. She didn't think about herself, however. Not on any constructive level, he thought.

He would have to smother his disapproval, or she would start in on him. Why didn't he straighten himself out like she was doing? Why didn't he take up commercial art? What was he doing working as a nothing clerk in a print store? He was twenty-eight; wasting himself. Wasn't it time he—?

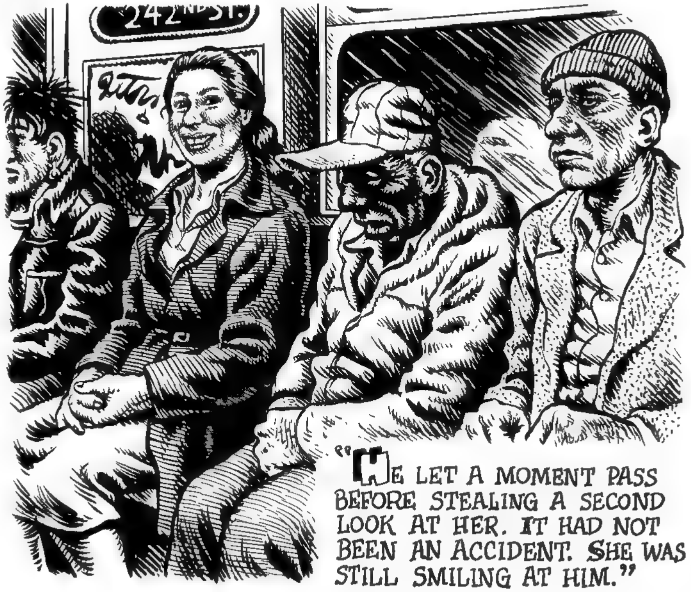
"I know all that," he would probably mumble, to deflect her assault. Finally she would retreat, and turn back to her usual targets, or make begrudging conversation about some neutral subject, all the while resenting its failure to engage him. There was no arguing with what she said, for it was true. However, she was the wrong person to say it. She also said it for the wrong reasons. When she wasn't carping at him she took only a perfunctory interest in whatever he was doing, feeling, or thinking. Their acquaintance amounted to occasional dinners; their sympathy for each other stayed skin-deep.

What kept their relationship from turning rancid, he thought, was that she privately suspected that something was terribly wrong with him, and treated him like a breakable object. She never asked him about the women in his life, and he was convinced that she half-believed him to be gay. Having a gay brother would pain her no end; it would deprive her of her status as the only victim of the family. Besides, she was a complete conformist, though she was too conceited to acknowledge that. She wanted her life to shine with surface normality, and a gay brother would take some of the sheen off things. Well, he thought, God bless superficiality. Whatever terrified her about him formed a useful protective coating over their conversations: it prevented him from ever having to admit that he was remote simply because he felt no kinship with her.

At 34th Street most of the standees scurried off the train. Arthur caught sight of one grotesque passenger; he wore a metal helmet that looked like a poached egg, and flowing purple pants with a raccoon's tail dangling between his buttocks. Arthur suppressed a smirk. Perhaps the man was harmless. New York was full of grade B eccentrics like that.

Sometimes he felt that there was nothing he could paint in the city. He had tried to draw the broken people who passed their lives in the waiting room of the bridge bus terminal. The desolation he hoped to depict seemed trite to him afterwards. What would have passed as the product of a daringly morbid sensibility a dozen years ago was now pennyworth reality, as provocative as Norman Rockwell. How great it would have been to live in the Renaissance, or some ancient age when nothing magnificent had ever been done! Then a man could contribute something fresh. Anything he painted with the canvas at his disposal would be his equivalent of brandishing a raccoon's tail between his legs... His sister was right, in her dull way. He was getting too old to inhabit a dead cocoon of unrealized talent. His reluctance to paint made no more sense than a girl refusing to marry because the man of her dreams would not propose to her.

Normal people always knew their price on the social market. Beautiful women were often offensively selfish and snooty because they could get away with it: no one would put them in their place. Plain women had to be more giving in order to get on in the world. Geniuses, celebrities, and people with money could afford to be prima donnas. Nothing entitled him to be a prima donna, but he was one, in a sly way. He thought he was somehow too good to become a mediocre artist, so he frittered away his time with sketches that were preludes to nothing. He was more a daydreamer than an artist, using despair as an excuse to daydream.


242ND ST.
"HE LET A MOMENT PASS BEFORE STEALING A SECOND LOOK AT HER. IT HAD NOT BEEN AN ACCIDENT. SHE WAS STILL SMILING AT HIM."

He had even convinced himself that he had no time to draw. The time he was investing in this idle visit to his sister could have been applied to art, of course. He was kidding himself when he imagined that he would some day settle down and begin serious painting. The pictures would never paint themselves, which was what he really wanted them to do.

None of these reflections disturbed him for the moment. It was as if he were thinking about another person. It dawned on him that he had regurgitated these thoughts before, and was becoming increasingly indifferent to their bleak conclusions. Maybe he was simply bracing himself for a complete break with art.

Suddenly he saw what his smug self-analysis amounted to: on the pretext of lacerating himself, he was congratulating himself for his honesty. What creature within him was he outwitting in this silly fashion? Some department of his ego must be operating at a large deficit, he realized, for him to go to these elaborate extents to wrest a petty profit from his ruminations. *It wouldn't be that way,* he told himself, *if you were painting.* He closed his eyes and thought of himself.

His sister liked to think of him as neurotic. He had found the label conforting, rather than disquieting. It exempted him from effort. Now he wondered if the trouble with himself was not some intellectually melodramatic neurosis at all, but laziness. What did it mean to imagine himself neurotic, except to play the role of an invalid? In this capacity he could coddle himself... while doing nothing. And what a crock that was! He hated himself for his lethargy.

No matter what caused this problem, there was a simple cure for it. He had only to throw away his crutches. He ought to challenge his sister. If you are so concerned for me, he should tell her, why don't you let me use your garage as a studio? I could come out on weekends. He had never wanted to make this proposal, chiefly because he didn't like the idea of maintaining any ties to her. But, of course, he would be losing something either way. The question was which way he wanted to lose something.

As he twiddled with these thoughts Arthur grew restful. It was becoming a productive ride.

Along the rim of his eye he noticed someone watching him, and he carefully looked across the aisle of the train, as if his interest had been lightly pricked by a poster ad. He lowered his glance to the level of a girl sitting a few yards to his left on the other side of the train.

She had a beige complexion and black hair that glistened like the bristles of an unused paint brush. He took her to be in her middle or late twenties. She was smiling ecstatically at him. Her teeth had the whiteness of corneas, and he saw no blemishes upon her face.

To smile like that at someone! He wished he could do that. He looked away in embarrassment.

She must have gotten on at 59th Street, he supposed. The train was now rumbling somewhere between the Seventies and Nineties, and he guessed that she was headed for the same bus terminal as he.

He let a moment pass before stealing a second look at her. It had not been an accident. She was still smiling at him.

He tried smiling back, returning more of a shrug. Now she seemed on the verge of laughing.

He was at a loss for gestures. Whenever he had locked eyes with women on the street nothing had come of it; he never kenw what to say or do in those situations.

Again he looked towards her, this time making no effort to dilute his interest. She had neither removed her eyes from him nor stopped smiling. As their glances engulfed each other he felt himself getting light-headed. It was as if they were in bed together, it seemed so private.

The other passengers were paying no attention to him. When he looked away from her he thought about her appearance. She wore her hair brushed and pinned back on the sides, just carelessly enough to attract him. She had a heavily fluted upper lip and delicate eyebrows that looked like neither streaks nor stitches. She was not dressed like a career woman; possibly, she might be a school teacher. He took her to be Italian, though she looked a little untidy for an Italian girl.

It was odd how appealing she seemed. He was, he knew without caring, already beginning to turn an above average work of human art into a small classic. It always happened that way.

He turned to her again with a half-knowing smile that seemed to give her another fit of merriment. Now he was periodically looking at her simply to treat himself.

In spite of himself he felt the rustle of a growing erection. He couldn't fantasize about fucking her; she was too close to his grasp.

He could never have looked at a female with the absorption she was displaying in him. To hit on total strangers always struck him as crass. There appeared to be nothing crass about her forwardness, though.

He felt deliriously happy. For some time he believed that he had already received the best fuck of his life, and this notion had depressed him. Now he saw how silly that was.

He toyed ceremoniously with his paper, pretending to read it. When he looked over again at her she was smiling and shaking her head, as if to tell him that she saw through his trick.

As the subway car left the 168th Street station he gave a nervous start. How was he going to handle this situation?

For once he found a ready answer to one of his dilemmas. He would just let things happen. The situation itself would cradle him like the crest of a wave. That was how things should be.

At 175th Street they filed out of the train together. As they passed the framed advertising posters that proclaimed: You are what you buy, he decided to speak.

"Would you mind telling me what was so funny?" he asked, his voice suggesting that this was an inconsequential question.

"Let's talk upstairs," she replied matter-of-factly.

They headed into a coffee shop. Up close she seemed smaller, and a little careworn. She lit a cigarette as soon as she sat down, and he noticed that two of her fingers were jaundiced with nicotine.

"Coffee?" he asked when a busboy approached the counter. She accepted this suggestion with a slight nod.

"Well," he began again. "I'm waiting to hear what this is all about."

She seemed uncomfortable, almost shy.

"It's hard to explain," she said, groping. "When I saw you sitting there on the train I started thinking, life is funny. It isn't so terrible after all."

He didn't know what to make of this remark.

"There's something funny about my face?" he asked with mock displeasure.

"It's not easy to talk about . . ." She frowned and looked grimly into space. She had raised her elbows and was leaning her head against her palms. He noticed that she blinked excessively.

Exhaling smoke, she looked at him as if for the first time. "See, I'm depressed most of the time," she said slowly. "I've tried killing myself three times." She turned her wrists outward for him to inspect. Without touching them he glanced down at a raised scar, the length and thickness of a sewing needle.

"One time I tried to gas myself," she added. "That didn't work."

He made a dismayed face. "Why'd you—?" He glanced around, afraid other people might be eavesdropping.

"I don't know. I can't take it, I guess. Things just get to be too much for me, sometimes . . . I've been getting stronger lately. This has just been a horrible day for me. Everything went wrong. Then when I saw you, I don't know . . . It seemed . . . reassuring." She said the last word uncertainly.

"It's nice to know that I have such a positive effect on people," he said, trying to conceal his disappointment. "Have you been seeing a shrink?"

She gave a nod that signified no enthusiasm.

"My sister's been going to one. It really helps her."

He did not want to look directly at her. From his halting glances he saw less sorrow etched in her than hurt. She seemed timid and fearful. He thought to soothe her by pretending they were having an ordinary conversation.

"You know, you have a gorgeous smile," he said abruptly.

His remark seemed to cheer her, but the smile did not show itself. Without it, she did not look particularly attractive any more. She was awfully undernourished; her arms were like tubes.

"Where are you off to?" he asked, hoping to nudge the conversation towards a conclusion.

"To my parents' out in Woodbridge."

"Do you know when your bus leaves?"

"I think they leave pretty regularly around this time."

"Listen, I have a dinner engagement I have to keep. I don't mean to put you off, but I was supposed to be there at seven. Tell you what why don't I give you my name and number . . ."As he scrawled this information on her matchbook he was cautioning himself not to feed her hopes.

"Give me a ring sometime," he said, handing her the matchbook. "I'm pretty busy, but . . ."

"I'll only be in town for another week."

"Oh," he said, trying to sound disappointed. "Where do you live?"

"In Cleveland."

That's nice, he thought. Cleveland's pretty far away.

"You know, I almost forgot to ask you your name."

"Emily."

"Emily . . . what?"

"Emily Schwartz."

"You must be Jewish."

She nodded, looking dismayed.

"I'm not Jewish, but I love Levy's rye," he said. "Also bad jokes."

"What's your name?"

"Art Driscoll."

He was tempted to begin: I hope you don't think I'm running out on you . . . but he did not want to leave the wrong impression.

"I hope you don't mind that I laughed at you," she said in a beaten voice.

"I got a real kick out of it." He paused. "Emily, please do me a favor. I hate to ask you this, but if you call, don't make it too late, or my girlfriend will think there's something going on between us."

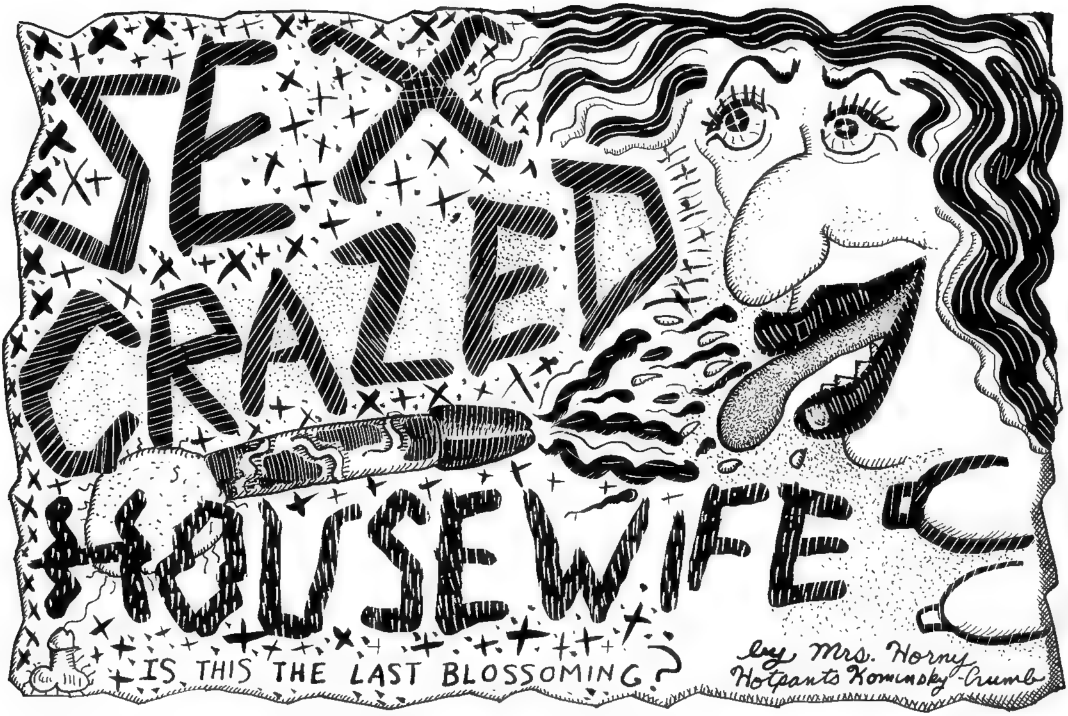
"I probably won't call," she said, ruining what he thought had been a perfect brush-off.

"I wouldn't mind if you did."

He wondered if she picked up the reluctance in his voice. This thought delayed him, and he stared morosely at his coffee, which he hadn't sipped. Now he saw that she had nothing to say.

"Let me get on down the road," he said, standing up and patting her weakly on the shoulder. "Take care of yourself."

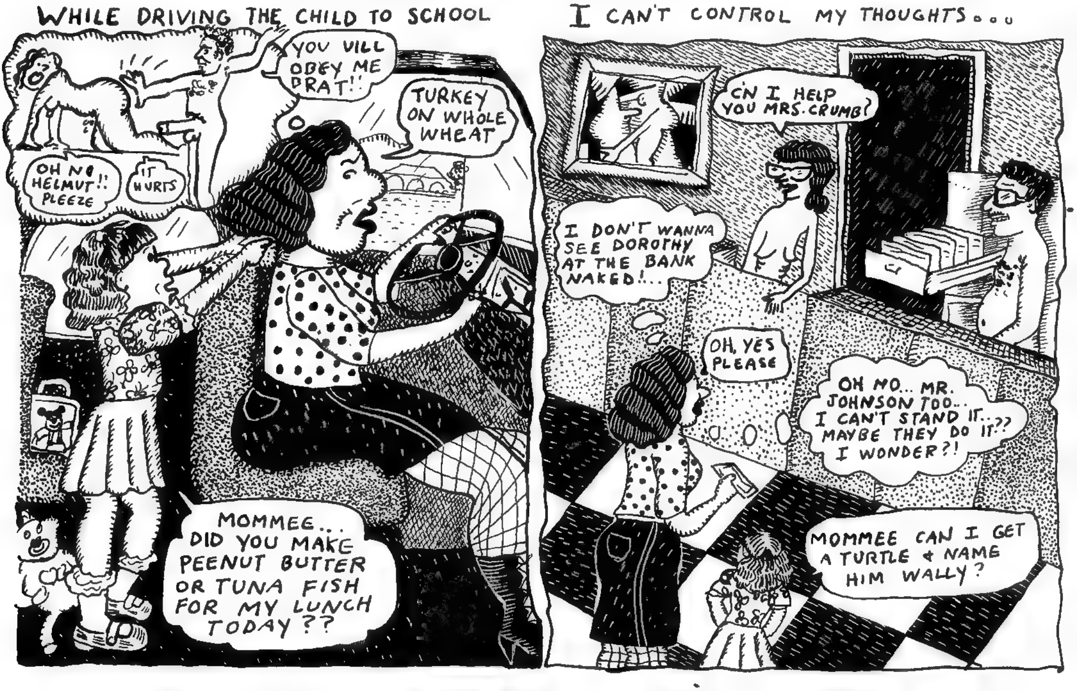
He sensed that she was trying to look unaffected by their parting. He did not look back as he pressed open the glass door of the coffee shop. As he started up the escalator he wondered if he was being a bastard, a nice guy, or a commendably cagey character.

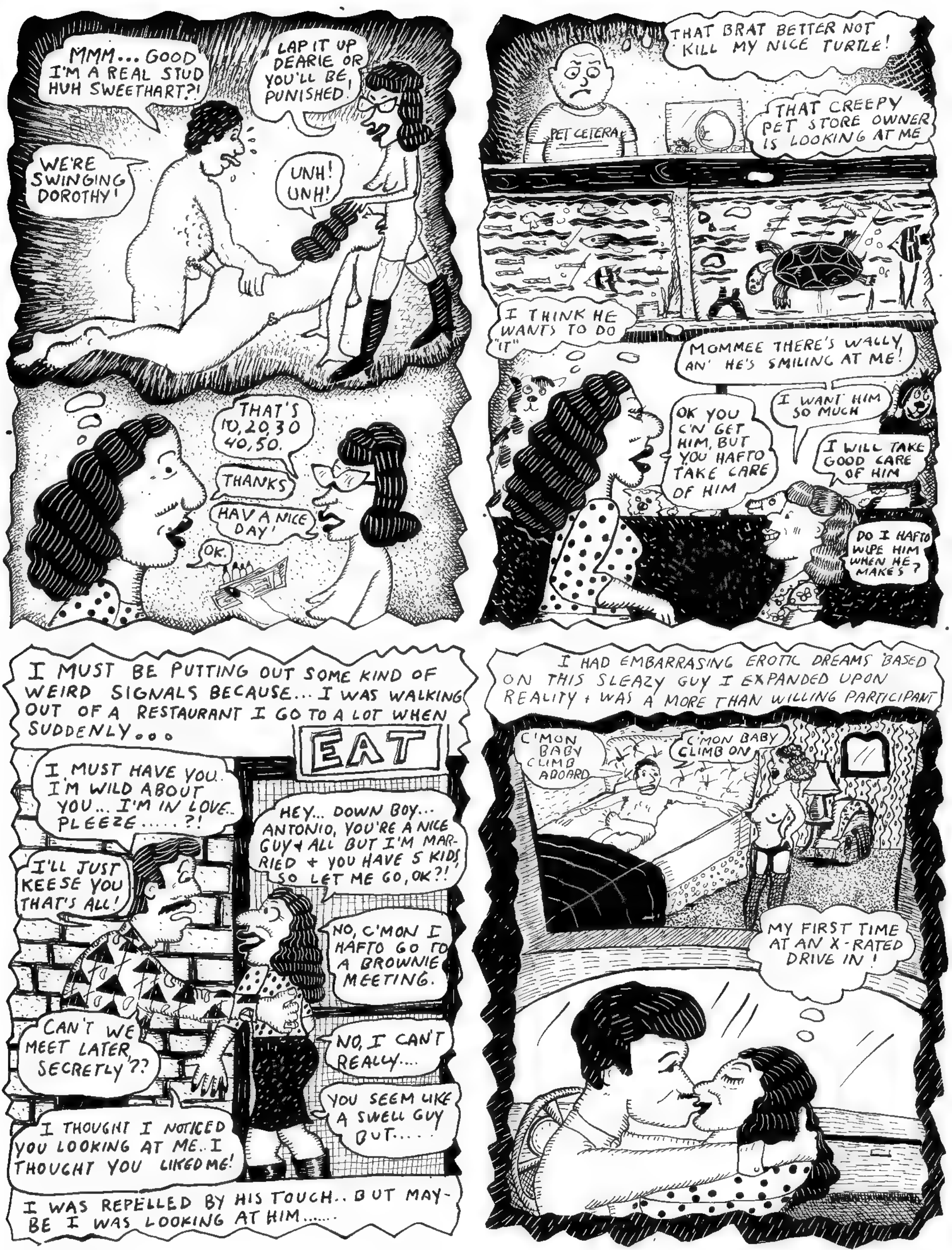


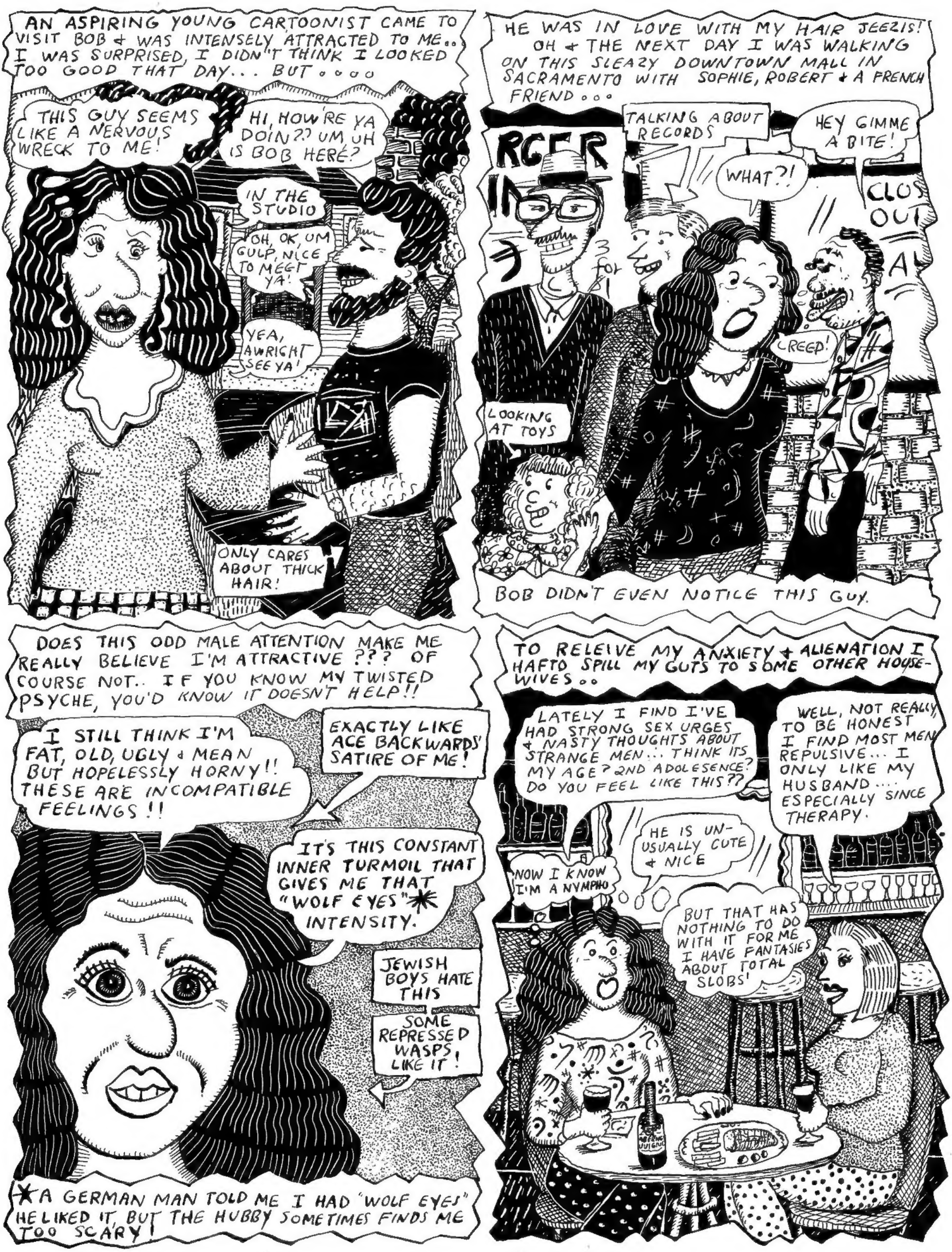
SEX CRAZED HOUSEWIFE

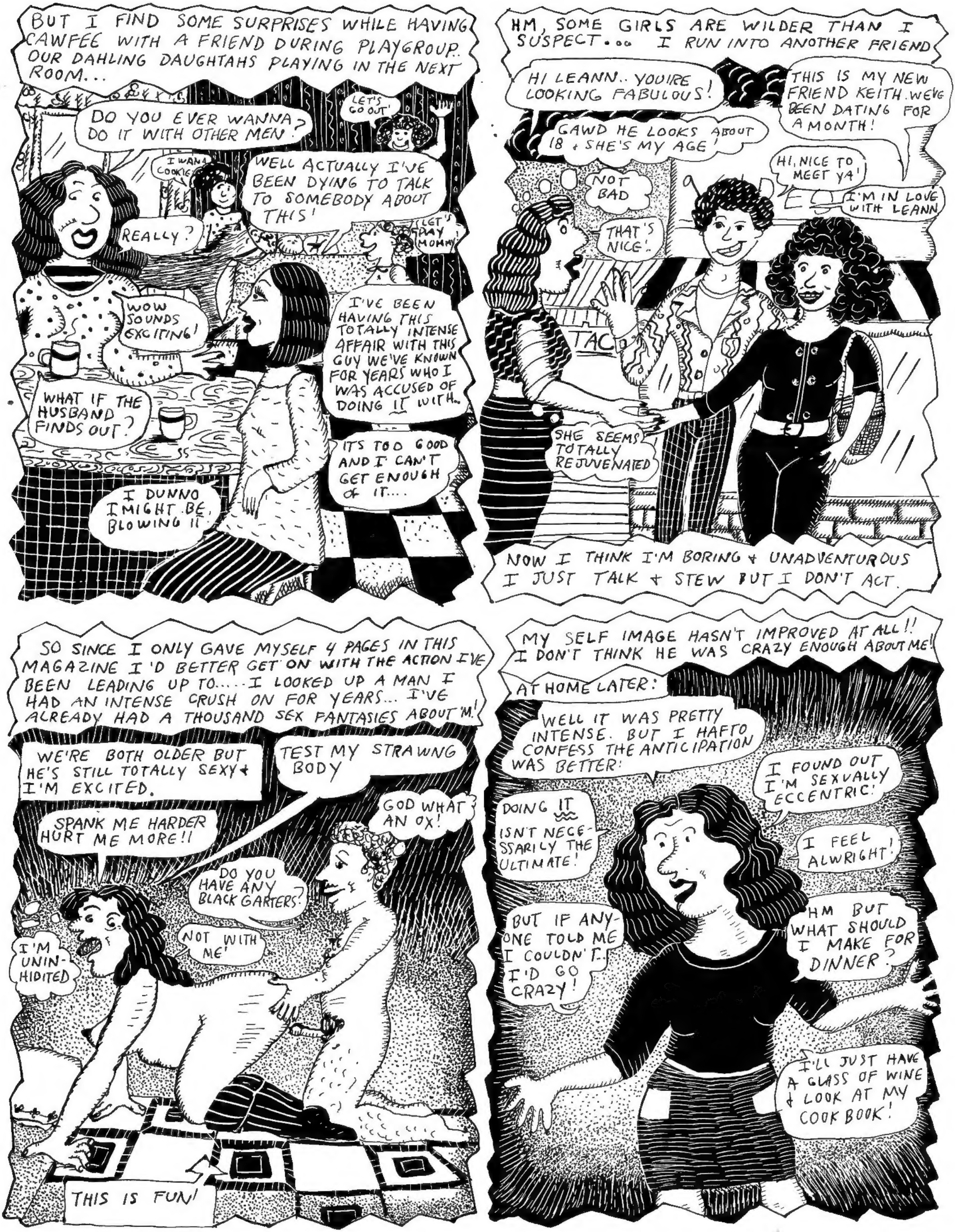
IS THIS THE LAST BLOSSOMING?

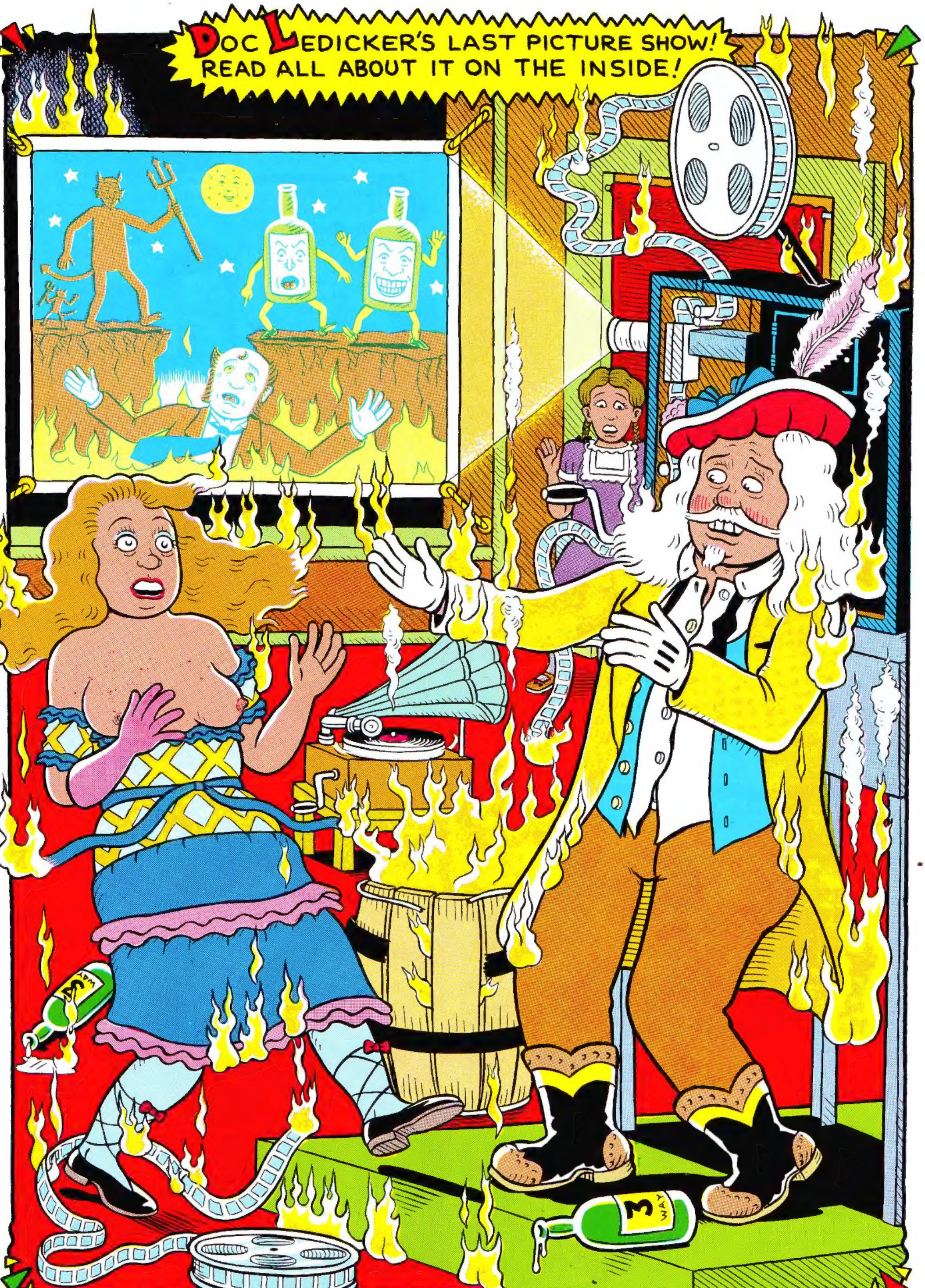
by Mrs. Horny Hotpants Kominsky-Crumb


WHILE DRIVING THE CHILD TO SCHOOL
YOU VILL OBEY ME BRAT!!
TURKEY ON WHOLE WHEAT
OH NO HELMUT!! PLEEZE
IT HURTS
MOMMEE... DID YOU MAKE PEENUT BUTTER OR TUNA FISH FOR MY LUNCH TODAY??
I CAN'T CONTROL MY THOUGHTS...
CN I HELP YOU MRS. CRUMB?
I DON'T WANNA SEE DOROTHY AT THE BANK NAKED!..
OH, YES PLEASE
OH NO.. MR. JOHNSON TOO.. I CAN'T STAND IT..?? MAYBE THEY DO IT.?? I WONDER?!
MOMMEE CAN I GET A TURTLE & NAME HIM WALLY?


MMM... GOOD I'M A REAL STUD HUH SWEETHART?!
LAP IT UP DEARIE OR YOU'LL BE PUNISHED!
WE'RE SWINGING DOROTHY!
UNH! UNH!
THAT'S 10,20,30 40,50.
THANKS
HAV A NICE DAY!
OK.
THAT BRAT BETTER NOT KILL MY NICE TURTLE!
PET CETERA
THAT CREEPY PET STORE OWNER IS LOOKING AT ME
I THINK HE WANTS TO DO "IT"
MOMMEE THERE'S WALLY, AN' HE'S SMILING AT ME!
I WANT HIM SO MUCH
OK YOU C'N GET HIM, BUT YOU HAFTO TAKE CARE OF HIM
I WILL TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM
DO I HAFTO WIPE HIM WHEN HE MAKES?
I MUST BE PUTTING OUT SOME KIND OF WEIRD SIGNALS BECAUSE... I WAS WALKING OUT OF A RESTAURANT I GO TO A LOT WHEN SUDDENLY...
EAT
I MUST HAVE YOU. I'M WILD ABOUT YOU... I'M IN LOVE.. PLEEZE.....?!
HEY... DOWN BOY... ANTONIO, YOU'RE A NICE GUY + ALL BUT I'M MARRIED + YOU HAVE 5 KIDS, SO LET ME GO, OK?!
I'LL JUST KEESE YOU THAT'S ALL!
NO, C'MON I HAFTO GO TO A BROWNIE MEETING.
CAN'T WE MEET LATER, SECRETLY??
NO, I CAN'T REALLY....
YOU SEEM LIKE A SWELL GUY BUT....
I THOUGHT I NOTICED YOU LOOKING AT ME.. I THOUGHT YOU LIKED ME!
I WAS REPELLED BY HIS TOUCH.. BUT MAYBE I WAS LOOKING AT HIM......
I HAD EMBARRASING EROTIC DREAMS BASED ON THIS SLEAZY GUY I EXPANDED UPON REALITY + WAS A MORE THAN WILLING PARTICIPANT
C'MON BABY CLIMB ABOARD
C'MON BABY CLIMB ON
MY FIRST TIME AT AN X-RATED DRIVE IN!


AN ASPIRING YOUNG CARTOONIST CAME TO VISIT BOB & WAS INTENSELY ATTRACTED TO ME.. I WAS SURPRISED, I DIDN'T THINK I LOOKED TOO GOOD THAT DAY... BUT....
THIS GUY SEEMS LIKE A NERVOUS WRECK TO ME!
HI, HOW'RE YA DOIN?? UM, UH IS BOB HERE?
IN THE STUDIO
OH, OK, UM GULP, NICE TO MEET YA!
YEA, AWRIGHT SEE YA!
ONLY CARES ABOUT THICK HAIR!
HE WAS IN LOVE WITH MY HAIR JEEZIS! OH & THE NEXT DAY I WAS WALKING ON THIS SLEAZY DOWNTOWN MALL IN SACRAMENTO WITH SOPHIE, ROBERT & A FRENCH FRIEND...
RCFR IN
TALKING ABOUT RECORDS
WHAT?!
HEY GIMME A BITE!
CLOS OUT
3 for $1
CREEP!
LOOKING AT TOYS
BOB DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE THIS GUY.
DOES THIS ODD MALE ATTENTION MAKE ME REALLY BELIEVE I'M ATTRACTIVE ??? OF COURSE NOT.. IF YOU KNOW MY TWISTED PSYCHE, YOU'D KNOW IT DOESN'T HELP!!
I STILL THINK I'M FAT, OLD, UGLY & MEAN BUT HOPELESSLY HORNY!! THESE ARE INCOMPATIBLE FEELINGS!!
EXACTLY LIKE ACE BACKWARDS' SATIRE OF ME!
IT'S THIS CONSTANT INNER TURMOIL THAT GIVES ME THAT "WOLF EYES"* INTENSITY.
JEWISH BOYS HATE THIS
SOME REPRESSED WASPS LIKE IT!
*A GERMAN MAN TOLD ME I HAD "WOLF EYES" HE LIKED IT, BUT THE HUBBY SOMETIMES FINDS ME TOO SCARY!
TO RELEIVE MY ANXIETY & ALIENATION I HAFTO SPILL MY GUTS TO SOME OTHER HOUSE-WIVES..
LATELY I FIND I'VE HAD STRONG SEX URGES & NASTY THOUGHTS ABOUT STRANGE MEN... THINK ITS MY AGE? 2ND ADOLESENCE? DO YOU FEEL LIKE THIS??
WELL, NOT REALLY TO BE HONEST I FIND MOST MEN REPULSIVE... I ONLY LIKE MY HUSBAND.... ESPECIALLY SINCE THERAPY.
HE IS UNUSUALLY CUTE & NICE
NOW I KNOW I'M A NYMPHO
BUT THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT FOR ME I HAVE FANTASIES ABOUT TOTAL SLOBS!


BUT I FIND SOME SURPRISES WHILE HAVING CAWFEE WITH A FRIEND DURING PLAYGROUP.. OUR DAHLING DAUGHTAHS PLAYING IN THE NEXT ROOM...
DO YOU EVER WANNA DO IT WITH OTHER MEN?
LET'S GO OUT!
I WANNA COOKIE
WELL ACTUALLY I'VE BEEN DYING TO TALK TO SOMEBODY ABOUT THIS!
REALLY?
LET'S PLAY MOMMY
WOW SOUNDS EXCITING!
I'VE BEEN HAVING THIS TOTALLY INTENSE AFFAIR WITH THIS GUY WE'VE KNOWN FOR YEARS WHO I WAS ACCUSED OF DOING IT WITH..
WHAT IF THE HUSBAND FINDS OUT?
IT'S TOO GOOD AND I CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF IT....
I DUNNO I MIGHT BE BLOWING IT
HM, SOME GIRLS ARE WILDER THAN I SUSPECT... I RUN INTO ANOTHER FRIEND
HI LEANN.. YOU'RE LOOKING FABULOUS!
THIS IS MY NEW FRIEND KEITH. WE'VE BEEN DATING FOR A MONTH!
GAWD HE LOOKS ABOUT 18 + SHE'S MY AGE
HI, NICE TO MEET YA!
NOT BAD
I'M IN LOVE WITH LEANN
THAT'S NICE!
TAC
SHE SEEMS TOTALLY REJUVENATED
NOW I THINK I'M BORING + UNADVENTUROUS I JUST TALK + STEW BUT I DON'T ACT.
SO SINCE I ONLY GAVE MYSELF 4 PAGES IN THIS MAGAZINE I'D BETTER GET ON WITH THE ACTION I'VE BEEN LEADING UP TO.....I LOOKED UP A MAN I HAD AN INTENSE CRUSH ON FOR YEARS... I'VE ALREADY HAD A THOUSAND SEX FANTASIES ABOUT 'M!
WE'RE BOTH OLDER BUT HE'S STILL TOTALLY SEXY + I'M EXCITED.
TEST MY STRAWNG BODY
GOD WHAT AN OX!
SPANK ME HARDER HURT ME MORE!!
DO YOU HAVE ANY BLACK GARTERS?
NOT WITH ME'
I'M UNINHIDITED
THIS IS FUN!
MY SELF IMAGE HASN'T IMPROVED AT ALL!! I DON'T THINK HE WAS CRAZY ENOUGH ABOUT ME!
AT HOME LATER:
WELL IT WAS PRETTY INTENSE. BUT I HAFTO CONFESS THE ANTICIPATION WAS BETTER.
I FOUND OUT I'M SEXUALLY ECCENTRIC!
DOING IT ISN'T NECESSARILY THE ULTIMATE!
I FEEL ALWRIGHT!
BUT IF ANYONE TOLD ME I COULDN'T.. I'D GO CRAZY!
HM BUT WHAT SHOULD I MAKE FOR DINNER?
I'LL JUST HAVE A GLASS OF WINE + LOOK AT MY COOKBOOK!


DOC LEDICKER'S LAST PICTURE SHOW!
READ ALL ABOUT IT ON THE INSIDE!
3 WAY
3 WAY

Kim Deitch

A Pyramid Scan
CW.
C2C • Quality • CBZ